

## Looking for us

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# Looking for us

by [fangirlandiknowit](#)

## Summary

Being in love with your best friend is never easy, but there might be light on the horizon for Naruto... If only Sasuke wasn't so oblivious!

## Notes

So, I actually found the first chapter saved and forgotten... And I just had to finish it! Because well, they're pretty damn cute in this I think. All titles and beginning quotes are taken from different songs. In this first chapter it's Robyn's "With every heartbeat". I hope you enjoy it! Edit: I forgot to cred the wonderful Debbie (Uchihanochildori/DebbieSilver) for giving me the idea for the truth and dare stuff. She's awesome!

Also..... I love cats. A lot. I have two. I just remembered how Naruto seems to be hated by them as well as most animals haha. So yeah I've got Sasuke's view on this just so you know.

## With every heartbeat

*“And it hurts with every heartbeat”*

xxx

“Hey Mikoto! Yeah, he’s in the living room, paying bills or something. Yup, we got it yesterday! I was thinking I’ll call Shisui later and tell him we’re coming. Seriously?! Yeah ok, I know I shouldn’t *sound* happy, but you know I never liked that cat! I swear it was out to get me!”

Sasuke frowned at Naruto’s cheerful voice drifting into the living room from the adjacent kitchen. It wasn’t surprising to hear him being all friendly with his mother, but Sasuke had felt a sneaking suspicion the past few days that all wasn’t as it should.

Or rather, he was starting to realize that things had been more *not normal* between them than they usually were. Naruto chatting with his mother like they were in-laws who actually liked each other being just one of those things, even though Naruto had always been on good terms with her. And what was that about calling Shisui? Sasuke had no idea what they were talking about.

“Oh by the way, that recipe was great! Thanks! I mean, I kind of burnt it a little, heh, but it was still good!”

Wait a minute – was Naruto talking about the vegetable soup he’d made a couple of days ago?!

“Yeah, of course he liked it, who do you think I am! Aah no, Mikoto you’re making me all embarrassed now!”

Naruto’s laughter was softer than his usual loud cackle, as if he really was embarrassed. Shaking his head and trying to ignore the vaguely disturbing fact that the blond moron was laughing like that with his *mother* of all people, Sasuke returned focus to his computer screen. As Naruto had guessed he was paying bills, or more specifically, going through the purchases they’d made from their shared account. Ever since he’d moved in with Naruto about a year ago, reasons being that his tiny room in a student apartment was not only annoying to live in, but also his flat-mates were just complete *imbeciles*, they’d used the account for food and rent and so on. It was easier, Naruto had said, than keeping track of who paid what and how much and then pay each other back.

Secretly, Sasuke was incredibly thankful that Naruto had offered him to live in his apartment. He’d been *this* close to murdering everyone on his entire floor, which would have been a little inconvenient for his plans to finish his studies. His best friend, on the other hand, had given up on studying after high school but was doing perfectly fine as a store clerk and part time gardener apprentice. Learning by doing was more his parole anyway, even if he still had grand plans that he would set in motion. One of these days.

Sasuke snorted, running a hand smoothly through his hair and stretching his stiff back a little. As a realistic person, Sasuke had never taken Naruto's plans too seriously. Still, he didn't have that same itch the blond seemed to have for adventure, so maybe he shouldn't look down on him for dreaming. Though, lately, Naruto had talked less of taking over the world and more about...

"Mhm, sounds good. I'll get to know my summer schedule sometime next week, so I'll know by then when we can go. I asked for June off since Sasuke's free too, can you even believe the job he managed to snatch?! I swear Kakashi has a thing for him... Pfft that'd be something alright!"

Frowning, Sasuke felt a nervous coil in his stomach. Naruto was a regular visitor at their summer house, had been ever since they were twelve and had become friends. There was just something he couldn't quite put his finger on... Rubbing his cheek he glared at the faintly glowing screen on top of the coffee table, scanning through the past month's purchases. They'd bought a new toaster, the old one finally giving in seeing as it was a hand-me-down from one of Naruto's cousins. He was sure they'd spent at least an hour bickering over what model to choose, Naruto wanting an orange one (why they even sold orange toasters was beyond Sasuke's comprehension) and Sasuke refusing to budge.

They'd settled for a normal, in Naruto's opinion extremely boring, silver model. For some reason, he gave in pretty quickly when Sasuke said he would accept the junk Naruto already had but refused to add to the mess in their apartment unless Naruto planned on kicking him out in the future. You'd think Naruto wouldn't take too well to his choice of words.

"Oi, Sasuke! It's your mom."

Naruto's head peeked around the corner, and Sasuke caught the phone when it was thrown at him.

"Don't throw expensive things, idiot," he muttered before placing the phone by his ear, Naruto sticking his tongue out before returning into the kitchen. "Hello, mother," he greeted Mikoto politely.

"Hi, sweetie," she said, and he could easily hear the gentle smile in her voice. "*Naruto told me you've been looking tired lately, you're not overworking yourself, are you?*"

Sending a glare through the wall, Sasuke spent ten minutes trying to convince his mother he was perfectly fine, just suffering from a little exam stress at the end of the semester. Sometimes he thought his obnoxious friend got some sort of sadistic pleasure from causing his mother to nag at him out of concern for his health. He'd pointed it out to his brother once, the smart reply being that he was just the kind of person people like to fuss over. Un-fucking-believable.

"You never told me we're invited to Shisui's birthday party," he commented offhandedly when he entered the kitchen after the call had ended.

Naruto, who was squatting in front of the oven and staring intently at something inside, shrugged and tipped his head backwards to look up at him as he stopped right behind him.

“I forgot, besides you’ve been busy.”

“Hn,” was all Sasuke could think of saying, staring down into deep blue eyes.

It was strange, but lately he’d found that Naruto looked at him a lot. Or maybe he’d always done that and Sasuke hadn’t noticed until now.

“Itachi said he wants some kind of book, I don’t know I told him to just tell you instead.”

“When did you talk to Itachi?” Sasuke frowned, but Naruto simply flashed him a smile before standing up and grabbing an oven mitt.

“We had lunch yesterday,” he said distractedly after a small pause, maneuvering the chicken out of the oven and spreading a mouthwatering scent throughout the room.

Since when did Naruto get so good at cooking anyway?! He could remember when he first got the place, proudly proclaiming he’d only use his new kitchen to cook ramen. He couldn’t believe it was almost three years ago. Jeez, they’d thought they were so grown-up right after high school...

“You know,” Naruto grinned, leaning against the counter and raising a teasing eyebrow at him. “For someone so smart you sure have trouble paying attention to what goes on around you.”

Narrowing his eyes, Sasuke blew some air out of his nose and promptly ignored his friend, deciding to set the table instead. He could feel Naruto’s gaze following him, his grin most likely widening on Sasuke’s expense. When the blond wanted to, he could be so *incredibly* annoying. He knew all too well how to push Sasuke’s buttons, and sometimes he honestly wondered how they’d managed to stay friends for ten years already. He must have Alzheimer’s specifically when it came to the irritating things Naruto did.

“Aww is Sasu-chan pouting now?”

Sasuke’s fingers clenched around the plate he currently held, two imaginary holes burned through Naruto’s mocking face. There must have been something amusing about his annoyance, because Naruto’s mouth twitched, and he bit his lower lip in vain to stop the smile threatening to ruin his teasing. If anything, it made Sasuke’s nerves boil even worse. The fact that it wasn’t necessarily a negative kind of boiling startled him, surprise flicking over his features so quick he wasn’t even sure he’d felt it. He wet his lips nervously, palms turning sweaty against the plate.

“Ah shit, the sauce!” Naruto exclaimed, turning around, making an exaggerated fuss as he lifted the pot off the stove.

Since when were things so *strange*?

xxx

“Sasuke! Have you seen my keys?” Naruto shouted from the hallway, causing Sasuke to sigh and abandon buttoning his shirt in favor of leaning out of the bedroom to shout back.

“Didn’t you use your leather jacket last night?”

“Yeah but I still can’t find them!”

Sasuke found the stressed blond rummaging through pockets, muttering to himself. Glancing around the area his eyes fell on a set of keys lying innocently on the floor next to a set of drawers.

“These what you’re looking for?” he asked, dangling them in front of his face.

“Yes!” Naruto groaned, grabbing them and stuffing them into a pocket in his bright green sports jacket. “Ok, I’m leaving now!” he added, but paused for a moment, giving Sasuke the weird feeling he’d been about to hug him.

Instead, Naruto bit his lip in contemplation as he stared at the half-open shirt he wore.

“I don’t really think it’s fashion to wear your shirt like that,” he commented, sounding a little too serious for Sasuke to take it like the joke it was probably meant to be.

“I would have buttoned it properly if *someone* hadn’t lost their keys,” Sasuke replied, rolling his eyes when Naruto pouted at him.

“Yeah yeah,” Naruto sighed, hoisting his messenger bag higher onto his shoulder and reaching behind him for the door handle. “Remember to buy that book for Shisui on your way home!”

“Right,” Sasuke said, pinching the bridge of his nose because really, Naruto had been reminding him over and over this morning.

You forget something *once*...

“Okay.”

Naruto paused, once again giving him that contemplative look. When Sasuke raised an eyebrow he straightened up, giving him a big grin and a salute before disappearing through the door with a “See you tonight, bastard!”

Sasuke stared after him for a few moments, before remembering that he was in a bit of a hurry as well. He was supposed to meet up with some friends before his lecture, just to relax a little from all the studying. It was one of the last before the exam, and checking through his bag to make sure he had all the necessary materials he noticed the yellow post-it stuck to his computer bag. *Remember your lunch box!* the note said in Naruto’s chicken scrawl, and he let out a noise that sounded like a mixture of a groan and a sigh. Sure, Sasuke tended to become a little forgetful before exams because he concentrated too much on studying, but really!

Arriving at the table where Juugo and Suigetsu sat, the first thing he did was complain about the note and Naruto fussing over him.

“But it made you remember your lunch, did it not?” Juugo questioned in his quiet voice, calmly sipping on his coffee.

“At least he only does it *sometimes*,” Suigetsu pointed out, munching on a sandwich. “Now Karin, she nags like you wouldn’t believe! I’m seriously happy we don’t live together.”

“Well he’s been acting all weird,” Sasuke said, continuing his little rant. “He’s been so, so…” he searched for a good word to use, but couldn’t think of any. “It’s probably just because we’ve been spending too much time together lately.”

Suigetsu gave him a look, sandwich halfway into his mouth.

“Now that I think about it, it’s been a while since he did stuff without me.”

Sasuke leaned his chin in one hand, playing with the small button on the sleeve of his shirt. Naruto was a party person, Sasuke was not. That much was simple. But somehow, Naruto had dragged him to a lot of things lately, be it a birthday dinner or a friend’s friend’s art exhibition. And if Sasuke wasn’t able to go, like now that he was busy studying, Naruto more often than not opted to keep him company. As long as he was fairly quiet Sasuke didn’t mind, but it was almost suspicious.

“Isn’t that the point, though?” Suigetsu asked, having finished chewing his piece of food. “You live together, so wouldn’t it be weird if he was always away doing other things without you? I mean, I’d be worried if Karin did that.”

Sasuke stared at Suigetsu, wondering what the hell anything Karin might do was ever relevant.

“Hey, you didn’t do anything, did you?” Suigetsu eyed him suspiciously, waving his sandwich at him. “I mean, that girl in your project group obviously had a thing for you. Maybe he just wants to make sure you won’t get into trouble.”

Sasuke was insulted. Suigetsu must have noticed, because he raised his hands to placate him, widening his eyes innocently.

“I’m just saying, no need to be upset.”

“I can take care of myself just fine,” Sasuke spat, crossing his arms and leaning back in his chair. “That moron’s been overstepping his boundaries for some time now, seriously since when does he have lunch with Itachi without even telling me! *Or* inviting me.”

Suigetsu shrugged, providing no help, and Juugo was no better.

“You can always kick him in his sleep for revenge,” Suigetsu suggested, grinning and winking at him. “Or, you know, make him sleep on the couch or something.”

Sasuke heaved a long-suffering sigh, letting his eyes sweep over the café instead. He’d rather not think about things like him and Naruto sleeping in the same bed. The blond had claimed that there was no way he’d be giving up his amazing bed to buy two smaller ones, and so Sasuke had the choice of sucking it up and sharing or sleeping on the floor. He hadn’t really thought about the fact that Naruto’s apartment only had one bedroom when he agreed. At first, he’d been a little put off at the thought of sharing a room, considering he had barely

been able to share an apartment previously. But Naruto was Naruto, and he didn't take a no. After a while, it had struck Sasuke that this way, Naruto wouldn't be able to bring any lovers over. He hadn't heard of any, not really, but he was sure it must have happened before at least occasionally, considering Naruto's social skills and the fact that he wasn't that bad to look at. But all he did since he moved in was force Sasuke to watch crappy movies with him and play video games, besides forcing him to socialize.

"Just forget it," he muttered, giving up fishing for advice.

He supposed he shouldn't have expected any, since he himself wasn't even sure just what it was that bothered him. Except he wasn't really bothered, it was more like... More like the way they lived right now was a little too comfortable, a little too natural. And he *swore* that sometime during the middle of the night, when he'd half woken up for some reason, he'd felt Naruto lying just next to him, breath tickling his neck and fingers curled around the back of his t-shirt...

xxx

"Welcome home, Mr. Probably-aced-the-test!"

Sasuke rolled his eyes as he stepped through the door, even though Naruto couldn't see him. He got good grades, but really, sometimes Naruto's complete certainty in his ability to get them was a little over the top.

"Don't say that, I can think of at least three things I got wrong."

Naruto scowled at him from his position on the couch, stretching an arm out to point a finger at him.

"Genius people like you have no right to complain about tiny things," he said, voice accusing, causing Sasuke to roll his eyes for a second time. "Besides, I already bought drinks to celebrate!"

Sasuke went over to the couch, leaning on his elbows over its back. He was tired, and in no mood to celebrate. Still, Naruto at least hadn't suggested they went out to party, like he sometimes did.

"I'm not sure alcohol will help my headache," he said, trying to figure out what show Naruto was watching, feeling blue eyes watch him in concern.

"Come here," he demanded, tugging at his sleeve, harder when Sasuke didn't immediately comply.

"What?" he sighed, surprised when he was pushed down on the floor so that he sat with his back towards the couch, Naruto's legs on either side of him.

"You're just tense, probably," his friend said, grabbing his shoulders and starting to knead them. "And if I un-tense you, you'll be perfectly good to go!"



“‘Un-tense’ is not a word, idiot,” Sasuke groaned, leaning his head forwards and trying not to think of how warm Naruto’s hands felt on his skin, especially when they snuck inside his shirt to get a better grip.

“Take off your shirt,” Naruto said after a few minutes, and without thinking much of it he did as told.

Naruto’s hands felt smooth on his back, and when he started pressuring a little harder Sasuke folded his legs in front of himself and hugged them for support. He could vaguely recall doing something like this in gym class once or twice, for teambuilding or whatever. He couldn’t remember Naruto being so confident about it however, almost caressing his neck as he searched for tense spots. Aah he could fall asleep like this, and unable to help himself he released a small pleased noise when those skilled hands slid up and down his back while thumbs rubbed delicious circles over his muscles.

Tan hands paused before continuing, this time a little more hesitant.

“Feel better?” Naruto asked, voice lower than usual, but Sasuke didn’t pay any attention to it.

“Hmm,” he answered, not wanting Naruto to stop but a little embarrassed to admit it.

“I’ll... go get the drinks.”

Sasuke raised his head when Naruto’s warmth left him, only realizing now that his legs had been touching his sides. Naruto had already disappeared into the kitchen, not giving any further explanation as to why he suddenly needed to get those drinks. In Sasuke’s opinion, they’d been just fine like that. But maybe that was a selfish thought. Standing up he stretched languidly, turning around to find that Naruto was back, albeit frozen in the doorway, eyes a little glazed.

“Did you get the drinks?” Sasuke asked, feeling a little self-conscious for some reason without his shirt.

Which was silly, considering he’d been all but stark naked in front of Naruto before. Actually, he probably *had* been naked in front of him quite a few times.

“Ah, yeah,” Naruto replied, shaking his head a few times and scratching his neck a little, avoiding Sasuke’s eyes.

He went over to sit on the couch again, Sasuke sitting down beside him and fishing up his shirt to put it on again.

“Beer or cider?” Naruto asked, putting a few cans of each onto the table from the plastic bag he’d carried them in.

“Either’s fine,” Sasuke shrugged, grabbing one of the cans without bothering to see what he’d picked.

It was a beer, he realized as he drank from it, eyes drifting to the TV screen to, once again, try to figure out what Naruto was watching.

“I was just going through the channels, here,” the blond explained, handing him the remote control.

Sasuke started searching for something to watch, wondering why he did since they’d most likely end up on Netflix anyway. Glancing at Naruto he found him relaxing into the cushions, one arm resting over the back of the couch and the other hand, the one furthest away from Sasuke, loosely holding a cider. He wasn’t good at reading the mood, but even he could sense that Naruto was acting a little awkward. Usually the other man would have strong opinions on the channels he flipped through, but right now he seemed distracted.

“You okay?” he muttered after a few minutes, settling for some kind of history documentary.

Slowly blinking, Naruto turned to him with a confused look.

“Yeah?” he asked, eyes flicking back to the TV as he took a large gulp of his drink.

“You’re not being as loud and annoying as usual,” Sasuke pointed out, wondering why he pressed the issue.

Neither of them were the kind of people who liked to talk about personal matters, preferring to deal with them on their own. Naruto took notice of his frown, sending him a faint smile.

“Sorry, I’m a little distracted. But let’s forget about that, and drink to your honor!”

Naruto raised his can, grinning brightly, and Sasuke shrugged off the strange feeling he’d gotten earlier.

A couple of empty cans later the atmosphere was a lot more relaxed, Naruto commenting and laughing at whatever they watched just like usual. Sasuke wasn’t a fan of drinking, and Naruto had enough party spirit to not need much in order to have fun and let loose, which meant that usually they’d stop at two or so drinks each. At least when they were having a night in alone. Because of that, Sasuke kind of wondered what he was doing with an almost empty fourth can after less than two hours, already having made one trip to the bathroom. His body felt much too warm, and he wasn’t sure if it was because of the alcohol in his system or the fact that Naruto’s arm was carelessly slung across his shoulders, squeezing him tight now and then.

“Look bastard, it’s your favorite show!” Naruto joked, grinning too wide right in his face, so that he almost couldn’t see the old rerun of a Victoria’s secret show.

He pursed his lips, smacking Naruto’s chest.

“Yeah,” he drawled, voice heavily lidded with sarcasm, “It’s my dream to go watch one for real. Or maybe I’ll wear one of the outfits myself, even.”

Naruto’s laughter exploded in his ear, forehead pressed against the side of his head. Thankfully he wasn’t holding anything with liquid in it, or he would have most likely spilled it all over Sasuke’s lap.

“Man, I’d like to see that,” he gasped, fingers clenching around Sasuke’s bicep almost painfully tight.

Then he sighed, forehead falling down to rest in the crook of Sasuke’s neck, breath hot against his skin.

“Really, that’d be great...” he mumbled, free hand falling down on Sasuke’s thigh. He flexed it a few times, both of them staring at it. “I don’t think I should drink anymore,” he said, voice stronger and palm now flat over the curve of Sasuke’s thigh.

“You’re the one who wanted to drink, moron,” Sasuke retorted, wondering why he was so acutely aware of Naruto’s hand touching him. “So don’t blame me in the morning.”

“Hm,” Naruto said, running his palm slowly down Sasuke’s leg towards his knee, Sasuke watching in morbid fascination. “I really couldn’t blame you.”

Sasuke furrowed his brows, about to ask what he meant when Naruto snuggled his face into his neck, pressing closer to him.

“Or maybe I should blame you for everything...”

Sasuke felt something squeeze inside his chest, finding it hard to swallow all of a sudden. He had no idea what Naruto meant, but the way he said it... There was something about the sleepy, raspy voice Naruto used that struck a chord inside him. There was a hint of amusement to the statement, as if there was a hidden joke somewhere that Sasuke was clueless about.

“What could I possibly be blamed for?” he asked, voice low, nerves tingling as he felt a smile slowly form against his skin, meaning Naruto’s mouth was touching it.

“Oh, this and that,” Naruto dismissed his question with, the fingers previously hugging his shoulder wandering upwards, sneaking underneath fabric to draw patterns on his skin.

Sasuke had to clear his throat before talking again.

“Like what?” he insisted, moved by that same morbid curiosity that kept his eyes trained on the tan hand that, at the moment, seemed perfectly content in its place above his knee.

Naruto was silent, for so long that Sasuke contemplated asking again. Just as he felt Naruto lift his face a little to answer, low music mixed with vibrations could be heard over the noise of the TV. He glanced at his phone, about to reach for it when nails dug into his shoulder.

“Don’t answer,” Naruto whispered, and Sasuke’s heart slammed against his ribs.

“It’s probably Itachi.”

He hesitated, but placed his can on the table and leaned into Naruto’s touch again.

“Don’t care,” his best friend mumbled, sighing into his neck. “I’m really tired,” he added after a few seconds, when Sasuke’s phone had stopped ringing.

“It’s still early.”

“Fuck that, I can sleep whenever I want.”

“I guess, but-“ Sasuke was cut off when his phone went off again, and Naruto made a frustrated noise before almost throwing himself across Sasuke’s lap, curling into a ball and rubbing his cheek against the fabric of the dark-haired male’s jeans.

“Just answer the damn phone,” he whined, reaching out to grab it and handing it to Sasuke.

Sasuke stared at him in fascination before the vibration in his hand brought him back to reality. He’d experienced a drunk and clingy Naruto before, but not exactly like this. The expression he showed was serious, solemn even, as he picked at a loose thread sticking out from a seam in Sasuke’s pants.

“Hello,” he said into the phone, still caught by the almost imperceptible frown on the tan face below him.

*“How was your test?”* his brother’s deep voice asked him, and Sasuke tried to form a good answer as he absentmindedly let his fingertips brush over Naruto’s visible cheek.

“According to the idiot I aced it as always,” he ended up saying, leaning his head back against the couch when Naruto let out an annoyed snort. “But I think I passed at least.”

*“Are you drunk?”* Itachi asked, amusement evident in his voice.

“How did you know?” Sasuke frowned, thinking he didn’t feel drunk enough for it to be heard over the phone.

His fingers were still brushing Naruto’s face, he realized, but did nothing to stop them.

*“Can I talk to Naruto? Unless he already passed out or something, that is.”*

“Okay... You two talk a lot behind my back,” he accused, Itachi only chuckling at him and demanding to talk to the blond.

“What,” Naruto grunted, rolling onto his back so he could talk properly, grabbing Sasuke’s hand when it fell off his face and putting it back. “What?!” he repeated, screeching this time and clenching Sasuke’s wrist painfully. “That is NOT what I’m doing and you can shut up now! Go to hell you nosy weasel!”

Sasuke’s eyes were wide in shock as Naruto ended the call with an almost violent press of his thumb, blue eyes glaring daggers at the innocent device.

“Did you just call Itachi a nosy weasel?” he asked, feeling an uncharacteristic grin threaten to show teeth. “I always knew your big mouth would get you killed one day, but I wasn’t expecting *this*.”

Naruto stared up at him, a jumble of emotions passing over his features before they settled into an exasperated grimace.

“I give up,” he groaned, hiding his face behind both arms. “Fuck, I’m going to kill Itachi in such a *painful* way he’ll wish he’d never been born. *Fuuuuck...*”

“You’re not making any sense,” Sasuke felt the need to tell him, utterly confused by Naruto’s mood swings.

Peeking between his fingers, Naruto’s deadpan look only served to confuse him further.

“I’m going to bed,” he said, eyes boring into Sasuke’s as if daring him to disagree. “Getting drunk was a bad idea.”

“It was *your* idea-“

“I know that!” Naruto had sat up by now, running a hand through his unruly hair, the dejected expression on his face making him seem much older than he was, and definitely older than he acted most of the time. “Let’s just... Let’s just forget about this.”

He got up, glancing at Sasuke with a pleading look in his eyes, before heading towards the bathroom, leaving Sasuke to wonder just what was going on, and why his body suddenly felt so cold. It didn’t feel warm again until he got underneath the covers next to Naruto, the blond either asleep already or pretending to be. Sasuke was starting to get used to being confused, turning to rest on his side so he could watch Naruto’s profile. His head was turned towards Sasuke, face relaxed and one hand half closed next to it. There were few moments when Sasuke wished he could read thoughts, but right now he really wanted to understand what was going on in his best friend’s brain. Lately he’d been so off and on, one moment all bright smiles and happy laughter and the other serious and almost morose.

When had it even started? The first time he’d gotten this weird feeling that something wasn’t entirely right... But what did Naruto even have to feel down about? Kiba had been teasing him a few months back about being eternally single, saying that his bad luck was affecting Sasuke as well, or the other way around possibly. Sasuke had never cared that others saw him as a lost case when it came to dating, but Naruto... Naruto was always happy and cheerful, and ready to share his emotions with the world. Maybe Kiba’s words kind of got to him, and he somehow ended up thinking that he’d never find anyone to share his life with.

Scanning Naruto’s features in the semi-darkness, Sasuke wondered what Naruto would be like in a relationship. Probably awkward. After all, it seemed as if about 80% of the things he said made women yell at him. Even Sasuke knew better than to ask a girl why she’d gone to the restroom twice in as many hours, but then again Naruto had grown up with his godfather Jiraiya, the insufferable pervert with zero understanding of women.

Could that be it? Naruto had never been in a relationship as far as he knew, and he used to talk a lot about girls when they were kids. Hell, he even had a crush on Sakura, which in Sasuke’s opinion was a rather brave thing considering her strong character. He was pretty sure who would have called the shots if that relationship had ever happened.

Frowning, he tried to think of what kind of person Naruto would be happy dating. It felt strange to think about it at all, since Sasuke never really considered such things on a personal level. Naruto wasn’t a difficult person, he supposed, unlike himself. He could be friends with

anyone, he was good at putting others first, and charming when he wanted to. It was strange that he'd never dated. Even more strange was the fact that the few people Sasuke knew of that had expressed a romantic interest in him had been given the cold shoulder. And so, Sasuke was back to confusion. Nothing made sense. In his thoughts, though his body was tired and told him to sleep, he spent hours of that night tossing and turning the possible reasons and solutions to Naruto's behavior. Was he lonely? Was he feeling stressed about his future? About the fact that most of their friends were slowly but certainly finding their purpose in life, and the person to share it with?

Frustrated when nothing good came out of his usually helpful brain, Sasuke eventually managed to fall asleep from exhaustion, clinging to the reassurance that at least, no matter what else sucked in Naruto's life he'd never be completely alone because Sasuke sure as hell wasn't going to get into a relationship anytime soon.

He didn't notice Naruto waking up, fingers reaching out to gently smooth out the wrinkle between his brows, didn't notice his quiet sigh as he fell asleep again, foreheads almost, but not quite, touching. Even so, he slept a lot better afterwards.

# Head over heels

## Chapter Notes

The song this time is "Head over heels" by Nause. Also a heads-up: truth and dare generators suck in reality. Just so you know.

***"So put your arms around me  
and whisper in my ear  
wake me up so gently  
the dream is still here"***

xxx

When someone first met Naruto, they might think he was a whimsical person. He was loud, impulsive, and he didn't care much for taking orders. But if they dug a little deeper, they would notice that Naruto was the kind of person who was extremely loyal to the things he liked, and rarely switched favorites. This applied to things like favorite food, favorite color, and favorite person.

If you asked the twelve-year-old Naruto and the twenty-two-year-old Naruto these three questions, you'd get identical answers.

Ramen, orange, and his best friend.

Looking into the mirror, he had to admit that a combination of the three was the answer to a fourth question, namely what the perfect date would be like.

Ramen, check.

Orange shorts, check.

Best friend... painfully unaware of Naruto thinking of their lunch date as an actual date. Check.

He sighed, thinking it was a shame to look this dressed up for someone who wouldn't be flattered that he made the effort. Then again, he doubted Sasuke would be flattered by him wearing anything even remotely close to orange on the color palette. Shooting down the urge to start fixing his hair, *again*, he wondered idly if it was possible to go crazy from twisted happiness.

After all, Sasuke was living with him, sleeping next to him every night, eating meals with him, going shopping together, planning their weekly schedule with him... The list of

everyday, domestic things could go on forever it seemed. He had everything he wished for, except for that tiny little thing called *romance*.

Now, Naruto was not a romantic person per se, but when it came to the person he loved he wouldn't mind a little sappiness once in a while. Too bad Sasuke probably didn't even know what the word meant, much less had a desire to act according to its definition.

"What the hell are you doing in there, it's been half an hour!"

Naruto grimaced at his reflection, Sasuke's voice sounding way more appealing than it should considering his annoyed tone.

"I was showering!" he shouted back through the closed door, which wasn't a complete lie.

It's just that cleaning himself wasn't the only thing he'd done in there. Sasuke didn't need to know *that*, though.

"You mean you were wasting water," Sasuke retorted.

Oh Sasuke, such a practical, reliable man, no sympathy for the fact that sometimes you just needed to take unnecessarily long showers that were bad for the environment.

"Shut up," he said, scratching a small patch of his jaw that he'd apparently missed while shaving.

At least all his hair was blond and not that easy to detect.

"I would if you got out of there," Sasuke complained, and Naruto could see him clearly in his mind, arms crossed and mouth thinned into a disapproving line, dark eyes glaring until the door slowly disintegrated.

Sighing, Naruto turned to open the door, ignoring the coil in his stomach at the thought of what Sasuke might say about his appearance.

"Did you miss a part?"

Whatever Naruto expected when he opened the door, it sure wasn't his best friend reaching a hand out to flick the side of his jaw, eyebrow lifted in that trademark, *Sasuke* way that no one was ever able to copy. It didn't even move much, but it still managed to piss him off and turn him on at the same time! Fucking eyebrow...

"How the hell did you even know that?!"

He smacked Sasuke's hand away, pouting at him.

"You've got scratch marks," Sasuke shrugged, moving past him into the bathroom. "Maybe you should fix it, I don't want to watch you scratch yourself the whole day."

Sometimes Sasuke was the most unappealing guy he'd ever met, and even then Naruto couldn't help but *want* him. It was ridiculous and it hurt.



“You’re just jealous because you can’t grow a beard,” he muttered, following him inside and grabbing his razor to shave it off dry, ignoring Sasuke’s eyes declaring him an idiot.

While Sasuke washed his face, Naruto discreetly loitered in the bathroom. He could, of course, leave. But where was the fun in that? He had a secret thing for watching Sasuke getting ready, because it made him think that, here at least was something only he would be allowed to see. Sasuke ran a hand through his hair a few times, apparently not bothering to put more effort into it. When Naruto narrowed his eyes at him, he only rolled his own back at him.

“Ready to go? Or do you need to put on some make-up?”

Scoffing at Sasuke’s poor attempt at making him feel bad for being slow, Naruto went over to the hallway instead to put on his shoes. As always, Sasuke’s lips curled upwards in slight distaste over the sorry state his converse were in, which never failed to set Naruto off.

“There’s nothing wrong with my shoes.”

“Sure.”

“Feel free to wash them if they bother you so much.”

Sasuke clucked his tongue, but said nothing else as they exited the apartment and made their way towards Ichiraku Ramen. While walking, Naruto tried not to let his gaze wander over to his friend all the time. He just couldn’t help it. Sasuke might not have put much effort into getting dressed, considering it was just another lazy Sunday, but in Naruto’s opinion he could be wearing a trash bag and still look amazing. It was another one of those sad, sad facts in Naruto’s life. And so, Sasuke wearing an old, long-sleeved gray band shirt and not quite matching khaki shorts was nothing less than mouth-watering.

“Why are we having ramen again?”

Allowing a smug grin to take over his face, Naruto shoved his hands down his pockets and sent Sasuke a triumphant look.

“Because it’s my turn to pick a restaurant,” he said, grin widening when Sasuke sighed.

“Yeah, but you always pick the same one. You might just be the sole reason they’re still in business.”

Snorting, Naruto wondered how it was possible to feel so happy from having the same argument every other week. Might have something to do with the fact that Sasuke, who would never go along with something he didn’t like if anyone else asked for it, *always* gave in and let Naruto drag him to Ichiraku’s twice a month. Shoving at his arm playfully, he snickered when Sasuke was forced to take a step off the sidewalk and glared at him for it.

“You’re just too picky. If *you* had a favorite restaurant, instead of trying to find something better every damn time, you wouldn’t think I was so weird.”

“I’m picky because I like to try out new things? And people say *you’re* the adventurous one.”

“Well, people clearly understand that when there’s ramen to be had, stuff like that comes second.”

Sasuke only shook his head at that, amused despite himself, and Naruto’s heart swelled with the now painfully familiar emotion that made him wonder if one day, he’d just lose it. He wanted to kiss Sasuke, he wanted to push the dark bangs framing his face to the sides, wanted his lips to connect with Sasuke’s a million times, and then a million more just because.

Fighting down the words begging to spill over his lips and into Sasuke’s ears, he walked the rest of the way in silence. Silence with Sasuke was comfortable. They didn’t need words to fill it, and most definitely not the words that Naruto’s brain was stuck on at the moment.

To ease the heartache, he decided to spoil himself with three bowls of ramen. As he was busy working on the third one, with some light conversation in-between, Sasuke decided to express his wonder over Naruto’s ability to practically make love to ramen.

“It’s no wonder you don’t appreciate real food,” he said, with that certain infliction in his voice that told Naruto more than anything that he was initiating an argument. “Your taste buds must have been ruined by overexposure to ramen.”

Slurping up a few noodles, loudly just to annoy the other, Naruto raised his eyebrows in question.

“I mean it. Why don’t you just marry Ayame and you’ll live happily ever after.”

He would have laughed if he wasn’t busy marveling over the fact that Sasuke even knew about things like marriage.

“She’s not really my type,” he ended up replying, setting the now empty bowl onto the table. “Besides, you’re just hung up on the fact that I didn’t like that stupid fish restaurant you forced me into trying out.”

Sasuke muttered something that sounded suspiciously like “You’re stupid,” but Naruto didn’t really let it get to him. It was like that a lot, anyway. They would argue more than they talked, because that was how they had become friends, and he doubted it would ever stop. He was pretty sure both of them often disagreed with the other just for the heck of it. And Sasuke’s ability to never hesitate in calling him out on being a little stupid was something he appreciated, actually.

Speaking of the devil, because Naruto really didn’t appreciate the phase some of their other friends had had when they seemed convinced that Naruto only went to Ichiraku’s because he had a crush on the owner’s daughter, Ayame approached their table with a pleasant smile on her face.

“Here you go, boys. We’ve got a couple’s night two weeks from now, nice isn’t it?”

Naruto stared down at the small flyer she had placed on the tablecloth. This must be the first time in the history of this restaurant that they’d pulled something like this. Was Sasuke right? Were they really short on money? He might need to eat here more often, because the mere

*thought* of a couple's night here sent his imagination careening down the path of the hell that was unrequited love.

He hadn't noticed Ayame leaving, not until Sasuke picked up the flyer and held it in front of himself as if it was undeserving of even occupying the same space as him in a ten kilometer radius.

"Well, this was the most ridiculous thing I've ever seen," he commented, and Naruto felt his heart sink like so many times before. "Sounds like just the thing for you. Maybe it's time you get yourself a date? You could go to this."

Sasuke waved the brightly colored flyer towards him, but Naruto was beyond words. His brain tried to compute the words that had surely left Sasuke's mouth, but for his best friend to mention both marriage and dating in less than ten minutes? There must be aliens invading, controlling him with freaky mind powers.

"Wow. This must have been the final straw to give you cardiac arrest. If I'd known something like this was enough to shut you up..."

"Give me that!"

Snatching the flyer out of Sasuke's hand, Naruto scrunched it up into a little ball, angrily glaring at Sasuke while he did.

"Don't make fun of the fact that I'm single," he sniffed, throwing the paper ball into his bowl.

"I wasn't. It just sounds like the kind of cheesy thing you'd enjoy. Making googly eyes over a bowl of ramen."

"Fucking bastard," he muttered, ignoring the picture his imagination painted for him, sitting opposite of Sasuke, hands caressing his across the table, drowning in each other's loving gazes...

Yeah, as if that would ever happen. Sasuke *hated* seeing couples being all over each other in public, and had firmly stated many times that he would rather wear orange for the rest of his life than be caught looking sappy in public. So much for Naruto's secret dream to walk through the city holding Sasuke's hand and smiling and kissing to make sure everybody and their mothers understood that Sasuke was *his*.

Except he wasn't. Which sucked a lot.

"Really though, is there a reason you're not dating?"

Spluttering, Naruto stared at Sasuke like he'd grown a second head.

"What the hell? Why are you asking that?!"

"I was just wondering." Sasuke leaned back in his chair, crossing his arms and giving Naruto a pointed look. "And I'm not the only one."

“What, why do people even care about that? I’m perfectly happy with my life, thanks.”

Sasuke still didn’t look convinced, and Naruto couldn’t understand why he was pressing the issue.

“You know, you could just answer the question.”

“Whatever. I don’t have time for casual dating, it’s such a hassle. There, happy now?”

He was trying hard to sound like he was annoyed by the questioning, and not like he was hiding something. Considering how well Sasuke knew him, however, he was hoping he’d at least take the hint and drop it. When Sasuke shrugged, he breathed a mental sigh of relief. That is, until Sasuke opened his mouth again.

“You’re the one who keeps talking about marrying the love of your life when you grow older whenever someone asks, not me. I’m just wondering how you’ll find that person without looking.”

Naruto almost wanted to cry. Because, right in front of him, dark hair messy, band shirt with print so faded it should be illegal to wear it in public, narrowed eyes trying to force the truth out of him... right in front of him was the love of his life.

“I’m working on it,” he said. “Just because I don’t go around dating left and right it doesn’t mean I’ve given up.”

Well, it was as close to the truth as he could get without giving Sasuke too many clues. His best friend/love of his life scoffed, but dropped the subject. Thankfully.

“Ready to go?” Sasuke asked instead, Naruto nodding eagerly.

“Ah, hold on a second.” He’d noticed a small piece of something gray in Sasuke’s hair, probably a piece of lint from his shirt. “Let me just...”

Stretching across the table, he leaned his weight on his left palm and reached up with the right one to remove it. Pulling it from the strands of silky, dark hair, he held it up with a triumphant grin, only realizing now that their faces were really close. Swallowing thickly, he laughed in slight embarrassment as he sat back down again, but Sasuke didn’t look bothered.

“Just don’t make a joke about me getting gray hairs,” he said as he stood up, pushing the chair back underneath the table.

“What? I would *never*,” Naruto told him, faking hurt but getting up as well while trying to shake off the rush of adrenaline that had run through his veins. “Me, mentioning you’re getting wrinkles and becoming stiff and slow? Who do you think I am?”

Sasuke now sent him a scathing look, turning his back towards him and heading over to Ayame in order to pay his share. Naruto took a moment to appreciate his back and ass before following him. His best friend might be an oblivious jerk, but at least he was eye candy, and Naruto couldn’t help but snicker to himself as he saw a few stares following Sasuke as he made his way towards the exit. To make himself feel a little better, he quickly caught up and

wrapped his arm around Sasuke's waist. *Sasuke* might take it as a completely platonic gesture, but the girls at a table close by sure looked disappointed when Naruto sent them a look that clearly said *back off*.

He might not be Sasuke's boyfriend, but best friend wasn't bad either, and he liked to shamelessly flaunt that fact in public whenever the opportunity arose.

Or well, whenever Sasuke wasn't in the mood to elbow him hard enough to leave a bruise that lasted for days.

xxx

"I am *so bored*," Naruto whined, slouching on the couch with his computer on his lap. "I need to get a life."

"You're the one who said you were too tired to join Kiba for dinner."

Blowing air upwards so that it caused the bangs over his forehead to flutter, Naruto sank lower in his seat.

"I already ate out once today, I need to think about my wallet."

Sasuke shifted, crossing his ankles comfortably in front of him as he lounged in the armchair diagonally from Naruto's position. He was slightly disappointed that they weren't sitting next to each other, but on the other hand, this way Sasuke couldn't see him taking whatever lame quiz he could find on facebook. So far, he'd found out that his spirit animal was a tie between fox and sloth, his perfect city wasn't Konoha even though he couldn't imagine a more perfect place considering Sasuke lived here, and his dream job was ballerina. He had, somewhere along the way, stopped answering the questions seriously.

"Well, some of us have studying to do, so maybe you should take your whining somewhere else."

"But Sasuke!" Naruto was pouting now, trying his best to look pitiful. "What about the quality time with your bestest friend?"

Throwing him an irritated look, Sasuke held his textbook up in front of his face.

"Go have quality time with yourself."

Naruto groaned, very loudly, sinking even lower so that he almost fell off the couch, laptop on his stomach now. Leaving Sasuke be for the moment, he tried to find *something* on the internet that could entertain him. Considering how much stuff there was to do, it was annoying that nothing seemed appealing.

Then he saw it.

He'd somehow found a compilation of tests, quizzes, and other things that some blog recommended. And there, among things like "What are you like in bed?" and "How to tell

your girlfriend doesn't like your friends" was a link that seemed to almost flash in bright colors, begging him to click it.

To be honest, he'd only participated in something similar to truth and dare once, and it wasn't something he liked to remember. But many were the dreams he'd had as a teenager of playing it with Sasuke. It would have been the perfect excuse to kiss him, right? Not that he, now, wanted to kiss him simply as a dare, but the possibilities were still many...

"Hey, Sasuke?"

He knew he'd have to tread very carefully on this subject, or Sasuke would dismiss him with a single glare and that would be it. Sasuke didn't react, but that wasn't exactly something that deterred him.

"Speaking of quality time... You know how it's good to get to know each other deeper and stuff, like, become closer, find out new things about your friends..."

Sasuke's glance was suspicious, so Naruto gave him an innocent grin.

"I mean, I already know you're a total coward when it comes to challenges, but--"

"*What,*" Sasuke bit out, glaring at him now.

"Oh no, I just, I bet you wouldn't be able to take even one of these questions. Especially since you've got the whole oh-I'm-*so*-mysterious thing going on."

"What the hell are you talking about ."

Inside, Naruto was cheering. He knew all too well that Sasuke hated being baited, but hated even more that Naruto had false assumptions about him.

"Nah, I won't bother you with it, wouldn't want to hurt your pride. And you always lose at games anyway."

There was a glint of anger in Sasuke's eyes, and Naruto gave himself a mental pat on the back. Not that you could exactly *win* per se in truth and dare, but that wasn't the point. The point was that Sasuke rarely let loose, but he *could* let loose, and when he did it was always a great experience. It was great for blackmail, too.

"Maybe I'll ask Itachi instead, he's a fun guy."

Oh, Naruto had him wrapped around his little finger now. Angrily closing his textbook, Sasuke thinned his lips and gave Naruto a challenging look.

"You wouldn't," he threatened, and trying hard to contain his laughter, Naruto made a non-committal shrug and grabbed for his phone. "*Fine*, what's it about?"

"What, you wanna play? I really don't want to force you out of your comfort zone."

"Goddammit Naruto, you've baited me enough, now fucking get on with it."

Full-out grinning now, Naruto clicked the link.

“Alright then, let’s see if your little ass can handle some truth and dare.”

There was horror in dark eyes, but Naruto was nice enough to ignore it.

“Let’s see... I’ll be kind to you and start, so you know what you’re getting yourself into. Wouldn’t want to scare you off, right?”

“One of these days I *will* murder you,” Sasuke muttered under his breath, crossing his arms with a frown.

“Yes yes, I’m looking forward to that. Okay, let’s see... Let’s do both truths and dares.”

Ten seconds later, everything was set for them to start.

“‘Do a catwalk across the room’, awesome I always knew my modeling skills would come in handy one day!”

“What skills?” Sasuke deadpanned, but Naruto put the computer on the coffee table and jumped up on his feet, eager to start.

“You’ll see!” he exclaimed, heading over to the other end of the room.

Striking a pose, Naruto pursed his lips and tried to mimic what he thought was a proper modeling expression. Sasuke’s face took on a pained look. As Naruto started walking towards him, singing *Sex bomb* by Tom Jones, hips swaying and hands running through his hair, Sasuke actually looked like he was suffering.

“Why am I friends with you again?” the dark-haired man asked as Naruto swiveled around, wiggling his ass and singing even louder.

“You’re just jealous I’ve got the moves and you don’t,” Naruto answered teasingly as he turned around again, having finished his little show. “But hey, now’s your chance to prove me wrong!”

Sinking back into the couch, Naruto clicked enter for a new question, secretly hoping it would be a dare.

“‘What was the lowest grade you ever got in school?’” he read, sending Sasuke a look to make sure he wouldn’t try and lie his way out of this one.

“Do I have to answer?” Sasuke asked, struggling with himself but giving up when Naruto nodded so fast his head might fall off. “Fine, I got a D in home economics in eighth grade, remember? You burnt all the food we made.”

“I did *not* burn all the food!”

“Well, not after I forbid you to even touch it you didn’t,” Sasuke muttered with a roll of his eyes.

“Sasuke, there’s like, *no way* you could get a grade that low just because of some burnt food. Come on, spill!”

Sasuke sighed, bending one leg towards his chest and hugging it with his arms.

“Okay, fine, I didn’t hand in the final assignment. You *know* how much I hated that class.”

There was no way Naruto couldn’t laugh at the memories of how much Sasuke dreaded that class. Not only did he have to put up with Naruto’s lousy cooking, he also had to deal with all the girls squealing and begging to taste whatever he made.

“Okay, okay, jeez I’ll stop laughing, no need to try and kill me by glaring.”

Still chuckling, Naruto pressed the button for a new question.

“Uh,” he said, reading it. “I guess some people have seen me naked... Like, my parents. And you, probably.”

“Don’t forget that time by the lake when Sai pulled down your swim trunks,” Sasuke reminded him, smirking as Naruto felt his face turn red.

“Oh fuck off! We don’t talk about that!” He hoped Sasuke would get something awful this time. “What the hell, why do you get the easy ones? You gotta switch one clothing item with me.”

Sasuke raised an eyebrow, then pulled off one of his black socks, throwing it towards Naruto.

“Ew,” Naruto said, but pulled off one of his own and put on Sasuke’s.

“Do you even *have* socks that aren’t orange?” Sasuke asked, sounding tired, but Naruto ignored him.

“Hmm, I need to eat something from the kitchen cabinets that isn’t meant to be eaten...”

“Sounds dumb,” Sasuke offered, but Naruto stood up with a resolute look on his face.

“Ha! Uzumaki Naruto never backs down from a challenge!”

When he came back from the kitchen, he was carrying a couple of tea leaves in one palm.

“See? This is perfectly fine!” he said, putting them in his mouth and trying to look like they were the tastiest thing he’d ever eaten.

“You’re an idiot,” Sasuke sighed, but waved at him to move on.

Swallowing with some difficulty, Naruto read Sasuke’s truth out loud.

“‘What music are you embarrassed to admit you listen to when you’re alone?’ Ooh, this is going to be good. Don’t tell me – you put on rap music and pretend you’re cool?”

Sending him a hateful look, Sasuke let out an annoyed sound before answering.



“I sometimes listen to the top lists for pop music... you can stop laughing now.”

Naruto, however, was enjoying this too much. That is, until he read his own dare.

“Okay...”

When Sasuke heard his skeptical tone, he got up from his seat and headed over to sit next to him instead, sitting cross-legged and knee bumping Naruto’s thigh.

“Do that and I will never talk to you again,” he said after reading the text that said *Pick your nose and show the others the result.*

“Why, you don’t think that’s sexy?”

Snorting, Sasuke clicked for the next question.

“Hey, that’s *my* job!”

Instead of replying, Sasuke made a grimace as he read the question. *Would you kiss someone on the first date?*

“I probably wouldn’t even go on a date...” he said, and Naruto was torn between feeling happy and discouraged.

“But, what if it was a close friend? I mean, if you’d date a close friend.”

Sasuke contemplated his words for a few seconds, fiddling with Naruto’s sock that now sat on his own foot.

“I don’t think I would date someone that *wasn’t* a friend.”

Well, Naruto’s chances were a little brighter suddenly. In fact, he was starting to think challenging Sasuke to truth and dare was the best idea he’d had in ages. Nodding in agreement, he read the new question on the screen.

“If you could make anyone in the room your servant for the day, who would it be and what would you make them do?” Well obviously it would be you, and I’ll make you... hmm...”

Sasuke looked rather unhappy as he waited for the rest of Naruto’s sentence.

“Ah! I’ll make you wear orange the whole day, cook ramen for me, *and* call me *your* *majesty*.”

“So basically, you just want me to suffer.”

Naruto’s grin was almost painfully wide as he poked Sasuke’s cheek.

“Well, what else could I possibly want to do to you?”

Okay so not the best question to ask because his mind instantly provided him with certain perverted ideas, but luckily Sasuke only shook his head slowly and swatted his finger away.

*Prove that you can cry on demand.*

Naruto looked at Sasuke, who looked at the screen with a pained expression, then their eyes met and Naruto really, really tried not to laugh again but he couldn't help it.

"Oh my god," he gasped as his lungs searched for air, "Please, *please* try it!"

"I really don't see the point," Sasuke declared, elbow connecting with Naruto's poor ribs. "Your turn."

"You are such a sore loser," Naruto snickered, absent-mindedly rubbing the forming bruise on his side. "Okay, here goes... awesome!"

"Do a headstand for a minute," Sasuke quoted, sounding unimpressed.

"Yeah! I'm gonna show you my awesomeness!"

Excited, Naruto ran over to the wall and quickly stood on his hands, letting his legs fall back to get support from the wall.

"Isn't that cheating?"

"Uh, you try it without a wall," Naruto shot back, blushing a little as his t-shirt fell down to reveal his stomach and part of his chest. "Are you timing this?"

Sasuke shrugged, but glanced at the watch on his wrist when Naruto started making angry noises.

"Okay, you can get down now," he said after a while, and Naruto suspected it had been longer than a minute.

"Bastard," he said, just in case he was right, and felt the relief of all the blood rushing down into his body again. "Alright, what's up next?"

"Apparently, I need to go outside and yell that I'm a superstar five times."

Naruto stopped dead in his tracks.

"Where's my phone? I really need to record this."

Sasuke got up, pushing him out of the way when his grin split his cheeks. Opening up the window, he then proceeded to yell dutifully, but lacking any sort of enthusiasm.

"You wouldn't make a very good superstar," Naruto commented as he noisily shut the window again. "Such a disappointment to your fans."

He got Sasuke's middle finger for that, but only laughed a little and joined him on the couch again.

“Relax, I’ll probably get something worse...” he trailed off, reading the words over and over again, feeling like a child in front of a mountain of gifts. “Oh my god,” he whispered, grabbing Sasuke’s arm tightly before he could even think of escaping.

“We are *not* doing this,” Sasuke tried to complain, but Naruto refused to be stopped.

Standing up, eyes shining, he proceeded to drag Sasuke over to the bathroom, forcing him to sit on the toilet lid.

“Now be nice, Sasuke, you know how important it is for kids to have their teeth brushed,” he sang, finding Sasuke’s tooth brush in the cupboard and rinsing it before putting on some toothpaste. “Okay, open your mouth.”

If looks could kill, well, Naruto would have died much younger than he was now. Taking a hold of Sasuke’s chin, Naruto hummed happily as he moved the toothbrush in even strokes across Sasuke’s teeth, taking care not to miss a spot. Now *this* was something to call Itachi about in the morning.

“Are you done now?” Sasuke said, or at least tried to because the words were barely intelligible due to the toothpaste in his mouth.

Making a few finishing strokes just to be annoying, Naruto stepped back to admire his work. If only Sasuke wouldn’t maim him if he took a picture. He didn’t protest when the other man got up to spit in the sink, rinsing his mouth with stiff movements. Oh, pissing Sasuke off really was one of his favorite pastimes. Not to mention he could stare at Sasuke’s butt now...

“Someone should lock you up,” Sasuke muttered, cuffing him on the back of his head when he responded with large, innocent eyes.

“Oww,” he complained, but trudged after him towards the living room.

He was honestly a bit surprised Sasuke hadn’t quit yet, but on the other hand, he was probably after revenge. Well, Naruto was positive he could take it.

When the next dare came up on the screen, Naruto tried to muffle his laughter behind his hands as Sasuke heaved a long-suffering sigh.

“I guess I have no choice,” Sasuke grumbled and fished his phone out of his pocket, handing it over to Naruto so he could text someone with it. “Just don’t text Itachi.”

As if Naruto would listen to that. Cackling evilly, he typed up *I need your help, I think I’m pregnant!* He couldn’t wait for Itachi to call.

“Hn, I think I know the answer to this one,” Sasuke told him, pointing at the screen.

“Oh shit... Yeah that was pretty bad!”

He had, once, accidentally touched Sakura’s breasts. And it really *was* an accident! But he hadn’t managed to apologize until after she’d kicked his groin... yeah that had *hurt*.

“It was fun to watch, though.”

“You’re an ass.”

Sasuke sent him a pleased smile, which quickly turned into disgust as he read his dare.

“Don’t. Even. *Dare*,” he gritted out, and Naruto did his best to keep a straight face even if the dare said *Lick the foot of the person sitting next to you*.

It was difficult, but he managed somehow, because Sasuke looked like he might strangle him with a sock if he started laughing.

“This is why I said your pride can’t handle it,” he blurted out, unable to stop himself, squeaking and lunging for the safety of the floor when Sasuke made a move to hit him.

Once he was on the floor, he released the laughter that had built up after watching Sasuke’s murderous expression. Rolling around he clutched his stomach, wheezing and almost crying.

“I hate you,” Sasuke informed him, kicking at him with a foot.

“You just made my day,” he retorted once his laughter had subsided, wiping at the tears gathering in the corners of his eyes. “Oh man, I can’t even...”

“This is a stupid game.”

Naruto snorted, sitting up and shuffling over to the table, turning the computer towards him. When the new dare came up, he quickly concealed a wicked grin. Clearing his throat, he put on his best poker face and moved fast so Sasuke wouldn’t have time to suspect what was coming. Getting onto the couch again, he grabbed Sasuke’s face and held it still before giving him a quick lick across one cheek.

“What the- that’s *disgusting*,” Sasuke complained, drying his cheek with a sleeve and glaring daggers.

“Blame the game,” Naruto said innocently, definitely not thinking of other parts of Sasuke’s body he could lick instead.

Mumbling profanities under his breath, Sasuke pulled the laptop closer to himself so he wouldn’t miss any other dares.

“Pick a person in the room and tell them what about them impresses you’.”

Straightening up, Naruto gave him an expectant look, punching his shoulder when he rolled his eyes.

“Well, I’m impressed by your ability to inhale ramen like your life depended on it.”

“Hey, that’s not nice! Answer seriously.”

“What makes you think I wasn’t serious?”

Naruto punched his shoulder again.

“God, you’re so violent. Fine, I’m impressed with…” Sasuke looked slightly embarrassed, narrowing his eyes at Naruto’s happy face. “Your ability to make people around you happy no matter what. There, let’s continue.”

He had to admit it was a little surprising to hear that, but it still gave him a nice, fuzzy feeling in his stomach. Hopefully, he was making Sasuke happy too… Shaking the thought off, he whistled as he read the question he needed to answer.

“Well, *obviously* Itachi is the coolest person in your family… and I’d say the most annoying is Shisui’s cat.”

“It’s dead now, remember? And there’s obviously something wrong with you since it was a nice cat.”

“Uh, yeah, it bit me all the time! And hissed if I even tried to pet it! I’m happy it’s gone!”

Sasuke was looking at him with disgust again, which wasn’t weird considering he’d brought up the notion of buying a cat together and Naruto had laughed hollowly for a minute before pretending he hadn’t even heard him. Why bring a killer cat into your home voluntarily? But with his luck, Shisui would have bought a new one before his birthday party.

“But fine, besides the cat, you’re most annoying.”

“Funny,” Sasuke told him drily, “I could say the same about your family.”

Naruto made a dismissive sound and waved the comment off, then gave the question on the screen a thoughtful look.

“Sasuke, what’s your worst fear? And *don’t* say it’s anything with ramen because that joke is getting old.”

“Hn. If that was my worst fear, I’d be a pretty shallow person, wouldn’t I?”

Shrugging, Naruto waited for him to continue.

“Well,” he said with a sigh, “I guess the worst thing would be if everyone I cared about died, leaving me completely alone.”

Putting his hand above Sasuke’s, Naruto gave him a sincere look.

“Don’t worry Sasuke, I promise I’ll never leave you alone.”

“Yeah, sure,” Sasuke snorted.

“I mean it! If we die, it’ll be together!”

Sasuke rolled his eyes, looking slightly uncomfortable from sharing. To avoid more on the subject, he clicked for Naruto’s turn.

“Huh. Do they mean on facebook?”

“Probably. No one is going to believe it though.”

“Hey! I could totally have run off and gotten married in secret!”

Grabbing for his phone, Naruto kept up his indignant expression as he changed his status to married. He hoped people would assume it was with Sasuke and maybe he'd get to know his best friend's view on the matter. Just as he was about to put it back, there was a small 'ping' to announce a new message, and he snorted as he read it. Seems like Itachi had guessed it was Naruto sending the one about Sasuke being pregnant. Feigning innocence, he sent a quick reply before motioning for Sasuke to move on.

“Ha! Look Sasuke, time to strip!”

Sasuke threw him a dirty look, but stood up and pulled off shirt and pants, much to Naruto's delight. Not that he didn't see that view almost daily, but now he could ogle from a close distance. When Sasuke reached for the orange sock, Naruto held up a hand to stop him.

“No way, that one's from a previous dare. Take off the other one.”

Heaving a frustrated sigh, Sasuke did as told and sat back down again, now in only tight, black briefs and an orange sock. Naruto was going to save this image for later use. Coughing discreetly, he returned his attention to the screen, frowning as he read a question about describing his first kiss.

“Wasn't that when you fell on top of me?” Sasuke provided, causing him to blush angrily.

“No! That doesn't count!” Which was a lie, because Naruto treasured the fact that Sasuke had been his first kiss and vice versa, but Sasuke didn't need to know that.

“Have you even kissed anyone else?”

Crossing his arms defiantly, Naruto puffed his cheeks and tried to ignore the few times he'd made out with strangers just to try and get his mind off Sasuke. Which hadn't helped at all.

“Of course I have! And the first time was with, uh, well it was at Sakura's party when she turned fourteen.”

“You kissed *Sakura*?”

Sasuke's face mirrored the disbelief in his voice, and Naruto felt a little wounded. What, he was totally attractive, Sakura could have wanted to kiss him!

“Well, no, it was Hinata. We were playing seven minutes in heaven... she actually confessed to me after that.”

“Really? That explains a lot, I guess.”

“Like what?!”

Sasuke looked amused, running a hand through his hair and being too damn attractive for his own good.

“Like why you spent two months avoiding her and never telling me what really happened at Sakura’s party. I was a bit pissed that everyone else seemed to know.”

“Yeah, okay, sorry about that, but it was embarrassing as hell!”

When Sasuke scoffed, Naruto did feel a tiny bit guilty, but back then he’d been in some heavy denial over his attraction to Sasuke and he’d been scared that Sasuke would figure out he didn’t like girls as much as he liked guys... Well, liked *one* guy. Turns out he really didn’t have anything to worry about, since Sasuke was dumb like that.

“Okay, your turn!” he continued. “Oh nice, two wishes granted, what do you choose?”

Thinking it over for a minute, Sasuke huffed.

“I’d wish for world peace and the cure to stupidity.”

“Huh. Why am I even surprised.”

“You should feel lucky that I’m thinking of you when I’ve only got two wishes.”

God, one of these days he really needed to wipe off that awful smirk from Sasuke’s face...

“Ha, fucking ha.” He was going to say more, but then froze, eyes widening as he read the dare he needed to complete.

“What,” Sasuke grunted, leaning over to read. “What the fuck.”

“Don’t tell me you’re chickening out on this one as well?”

Naruto had no idea where that came from, but his heart was beating like a drum and he nervously wet his lips, gauging Sasuke’s reaction.

“I haven’t been chickening out.”

“You so totally have! Don’t tell me you’re scared of a little physical contact?”

Naruto was bluffing heavily here, because in reality, he was the one almost scared to go through with giving Sasuke a hickey on his neck. Just the thought of it set off a nervous coil in his stomach, his palms feeling sweaty all of a sudden. Which was stupid considering it was just a hickey, it’s not like they were gonna kiss or anything... But still, the thought of placing his mouth against Sasuke’s pale neck and biting into it... Okay, dangerous thoughts! Taking a deep breath to calm down, he tried his best to fake confidence towards Sasuke.

“Well? Are you?”

When he started making chicken noises, Sasuke pushed his face away with an angry glare.

“Fine,” he said, his eyes glittering with the challenge. “I’m not scared. I doubt you’d be able to get though with it, though.”

“What! I’m going to give you the biggest hickey you’ve ever seen! I’m like, a hickey master! You’ll see!”

Raising a mocking eyebrow at him, Sasuke tilted his head to the side, curling his upper lip and showing teeth as he sneered at his hesitation.

“Oh, what a great job you’re doing over there,” he taunted, and Naruto felt something hot flare inside him.

This *really* wasn’t the best time to feel aroused. Bracing his shoulders he moved closer, kneeling on the couch and brushing some dark strands out of the way. He felt light-headed, Sasuke’s scent invading his nostrils as he leaned in, both comforting and alluring to him. Gripping Sasuke’s bicep, he finally allowed his mouth to connect with pale skin, clenching his eyes shut and forgetting how to breathe. He pulled some of the skin into his mouth, sucking hard, then used teeth to scrape across it. His heart skipped a heavy beat when Sasuke inhaled sharply, wincing slightly, but Naruto repeated the action just because he could, and because somewhere in the haze now clouding his mind, he had decided to seize the opportunity.

He probably held on a little too long, because he could feel Sasuke tense when he mouthed the spot again, lips caressing smooth skin before biting down again.

When he let go, he quickly scrambled backwards towards the edge of the couch and furiously wiped his mouth.

“Told you!” he yelled, trying not to check if he’d succeeded or not.

“You didn’t have to bite me,” Sasuke muttered, rubbing at the spot, giving him a weird look that instantly made Naruto feel both crushed that Sasuke probably hated it, and embarrassed in case he noticed how much he’d enjoyed it.

“Whatever,” he said, awkward tension settling between them, heart still trying to escape though his mouth. “Next one.”

*If you were to kill someone in this room right now, who would it be and why?*

Swallowing hard, Naruto gave a short, nervous laughter, Sasuke tsk’ing at him.

*Pick a person in the room. If they were a food item, what would they be and how would you eat them?*

Naruto was starting to think the randomized questions were against him now, and he cleared his throat and glanced at Sasuke, who rolled his eyes for the umpteenth time that night.

“This is pretty dumb,” Sasuke said, scratching at his neck where Naruto could now see a clearly formed bruise, complete with teeth marks.



“I guess...” he agreed, checking the next question. “How many times have you seen me in your dreams?”

“Does it really say ‘me’?”

“Well, you get the point.”

Naruto was feeling flustered now, trying to block out images of how he usually saw Sasuke in his dreams. Thank heavens the question was directed at Sasuke and not him.

“I guess it happens now and then. Usually you’re butting into my business or trying to convince me that stupid shit is a very good idea.”

“Heh, really? Sounds like lots of fun,” he joked, but even he could tell it was a bit strained.

When the next dare popped up on the screen, Sasuke heaved a long-suffering sigh and looked at him pointedly.

“Maybe we should drop this now,” he suggested, and Naruto bit the inside of his cheek.

He had to admit he wasn’t very eager at pulling off Sasuke’s sock with his teeth... He didn’t have that much of a foot fetish, actually. It just sucked a lot that what started out great, now turned into something really awkward, and he was certain that Sasuke would refuse to ever do it again. Probably he wouldn’t forgive Naruto for days.

“Yeah, well, I’m going to bed. No point staying up to study anymore anyway,” Sasuke said, stretching as he got up before gathering up his discarded clothes.

“Mm,” Naruto agreed, a sinking feeling in his chest.

Because going to sleep next to Sasuke wouldn’t be awkward at all now, definitely not. As soon as Sasuke had left the room he let his head fall forwards to connect with the hard wood of the coffee table.

Wow, sometimes he was just so stupid. Part of him wished he was even stupider, however, because this frustration was starting to take its toll on him. Being in love with Sasuke was both a blessing and a curse...

Snorting at himself for being so melodramatic, he clenched his fists and made a determined promise to himself. If Sasuke guessed his feelings, he wouldn’t deny it. It was something to be proud of, after all, having devoted his heart so completely to his best friend.

Because yes, Naruto was head over heels, and he could bet an entire life’s supply of ramen that it wouldn’t stop anytime soon.

# What if it's all in one kiss

## Chapter Notes

I'm sorry about the cliffhanger. Also, Sasuke's head is such a mess, sheesh. A big thank you to those who commented etc!! The song this time is "Not alone" by Aram. It was Armenia's song in Eurovision last spring, and idk, the chorus kind of stuck with me. That said, I had already decided this song for this chapter when I wrote the first one in May so I didn't change it.

***“What if it's all in one kiss  
That turns all seeds into trees  
The strongest wind into breeze  
Enter all doors without keys”***

XXX

It was Wednesday, and Sasuke tried to shake off his irritation. Yes, he might have made it through this semester's final exams, but that didn't mean he had lots of spare time. He'd started working for Kakashi, which wasn't easy, and while he loved his family he wasn't so sure he wanted to see them both now and on Shisui's birthday party just a few days later.

They had a tendency to *spoil* him... or that's what they called it at least. Ask Sasuke and he might use words like embarrass, bully, baby... the list could go on. Naruto, however, seemed all too eager to go.

“You know, if you like my parents so much, you should just start living with them. I'm sure they wouldn't mind.”

“Nah, don't worry! Then I'd have to leave you alone, and we both know you'd get lonely after ten minutes.”

Narrowing his eyes, Sasuke ran his elbow into Naruto's arm as they walked up the driveway to his childhood home.

“Like I would,” he muttered, knowing his limit was *at least* two days.

After that he might start to forget just how annoying Naruto's voice could be and think it wouldn't be horrible to listen to it again. Didn't mean he'd *miss* him. Not officially at least. But his moron of a best friend only grinned wide at him before opening the front door.

“Hello!” he yelled into the house, having long since lost his shyness when entering.

Sighing when Naruto threw off his shoes in a disorderly heap, Sasuke took off his own and placed both his and his messy friend's on the shoe rack. Naruto had already disappeared inside the house, and Sasuke followed his voice into the kitchen.

"Oh Sasuke, it's so good to see you two again," his mother greeted him, cupping his face and standing on her toes to kiss his cheeks. "I know you're busy, but it's so rare that Itachi has a weekday off."

"Yes," he agreed in resignation.

"Ha, don't listen to him. He's just sad he can't slouch on the couch tonight. He's in the middle of another TV series."

Mikoto shared a knowing smile with Naruto, and Sasuke couldn't help but frown a little.

"I'm not some addict," he objected, but Naruto waved him off, literally with a hand almost swiping at his nose.

"Shush, I'm here for Mikoto's glorious cooking. Go sulk with Itachi or something."

"Naruto, you flatter me too much." His mother giggled and took the blond by the arm to steer him towards the stove, and Sasuke was torn between groaning and throwing something heavy at the idiot.

"Fine," he muttered, not that anyone was paying attention to him.

His father was most likely at some important meeting, usually arriving right on time to eat. Itachi, however, was probably hiding in his room. He always pretended to have something he needed to do so he wouldn't have to help out before Naruto arrived. So lazy. Not that Sasuke was much better though.

He didn't bother knocking as he opened the door to Itachi's old room, finding him stretched out on the bed, nose buried in a book. All he did to acknowledge Sasuke's presence was lift a couple of fingers in a small wave, then turn a page. Huffing, Sasuke sat next to him, one hand on the dark blue bedspread and the other pinching Itachi's thigh.

"Ow?" Itachi said, raising an eyebrow but not moving his gaze from the text.

Switching to poking, Sasuke increased the force behind the jabs until Itachi rolled his eyes and scooted closer to the wall, making room for Sasuke to lie down next to him.

"Don't fall asleep," Itachi warned him, and he smacked the back of his hand onto the book so it almost connected with his brother's nose.

"Why, I thought you passed the phase of drawing dicks on my face at twelve."

"Perhaps, but I think you'd appreciate it if I didn't call Naruto up here so he could carry you down bridal style."

"You think you're so funny," Sasuke complained under his breath.

“Alright then,” Itachi said instead, suddenly all businesslike. “What’s bothering you?”

“Nothing. Naruto made clear my presence was not appreciated in the kitchen.”

Lowering the book to rest on his chest, Itachi gave him a look from the corner of his eye.

“And to think you call yourself independent,” he mocked, not moving when Sasuke kicked his shin.

“That’s not what I meant.”

“Sure.”

Gnawing on his lips, Sasuke contemplated talking to his brother about his recent troubles. Well, *trouble* was the wrong word, more like *a mystery*. After all, he still had no idea why Naruto stayed single even though there had clearly been people eyeing him even at the grocery store. Sasuke had been paying attention to it, for once, and was disturbed to find out just how many people checked out his ass, as well as Naruto’s. It was safe to conclude that Naruto didn’t have his looks against him.

“Why do you think Naruto is single?” he asked, not one to beat around the bush once he’d made up his mind.

It was interesting how many emotions flickered across Itachi’s face at the question, ending in pursed lips to contain laughter.

“Why indeed,” Itachi mused, amusement in his intelligent eyes. “What do *you* think, Sasuke?”

“I don’t think anything,” he retorted, frowning at Itachi’s expression. “But you obviously know something.”

Itachi simply made a face like maybe-I-do, maybe-I-don’t, and Sasuke felt his sour mood worsen.

“Whatever,” he muttered, but Itachi, apparently, was having none of that.

“I’m sorry, please go on,” his brother said, moving his arm to forcefully put it underneath Sasuke’s head, squeezing his shoulder reassuringly.

It was uncomfortable, but he let it slip.

“It’s nothing. I’ve just been thinking if I need to prepare for Naruto getting a girlfriend soon or not.”

He stared down at his chest, fiddling with a button on his dress shirt. If Itachi was surprised, he didn’t express it.

“You sound so sure that Naruto is straight,” Itachi mumbled, and Sasuke sent him a deadpan look.

“I didn’t say that.”

“Really?”

Huffing, Sasuke abandoned the button and crossed his arms instead.

“Considering we’re best friends, I doubt he’d pick another guy over me. So, that means I only need to worry about possible girlfriends.”

Itachi actually *laughed* at this, a quiet, bubbling laughter that went on for so long that Sasuke wondered just what it was that he could have possibly said to cause such a reaction.

“And here I thought you just said that Naruto was single?” his brother asked once he’d calmed down a little, making Sasuke frown.

“Yes?” Then he understood the look Itachi gave him, and felt his cheeks heat up a little without his consent. “What, we’re not together. That’s just... weird. Stop *laughing*.”

Even when he smacked Itachi’s hand, his brother refused to take him seriously.

“Fine,” Itachi teased him, “So Naruto is not straight, not picking another guy above you, and you’re worrying about girlfriends? Makes sense.”

Sasuke paused at that. When Itachi put it like that, he could see what caused his brother to laugh. Sort of, at least.

“But we’re *not* together,” he insisted, trying to wrap his mind around the alien thought.

He’d never even thought about it before. Naruto was Naruto, and he’d thought he’d always, somehow, be there, but he also thought that Naruto was the kind of person who would find some passionate love like in a movie. He knew the moron was romantic like that. Something Sasuke was *not*. Besides, they were best friends. If something like them dating could happen, it should have happened already. Probably. But it hadn’t even crossed his mind so that was just...

Itachi sighed next to him, then pinched his cheek.

“What,” he asked in a flat voice, glaring at the now much more serious man.

“I’ve got some homework for you, little brother,” he said, pinching him again when he opened his mouth to protest. “I need you to think long, and hard, about what Naruto means to you, and the nature of your relationship.”

Giving Itachi an incredulous stare, Sasuke wondered just why Itachi would tell him to think about something he already knew the answer to. They were best friends. Sure, people had told them they were much closer than best friends usually were, but that’s only because Naruto was Naruto and no one else had someone like Naruto for their best friend so it was stupid to compare. Naruto got under his skin like no one else could, he was always right there, and even if Sasuke might not tell him exactly everything going on inside his head, somehow Naruto still understood.

“I know what you’re thinking,” Itachi continued with another sigh. “But you need to think about it *more*. You owe that to Naruto.”

Then he sat up, bracing himself on one hand and staring down at Sasuke with a raised eyebrow. Smirking a little, he lightly slapped his book onto Sasuke’s chest.

“For all your intelligence, it’s quite possible that between the two of you, Naruto is actually the smarter one.”

Sasuke’s glare was freezing.

xxx

“Itachiiiiii!”

Sasuke heaved an annoyed sigh as Naruto, upon entering Shisui’s apartment, immediately ran off towards Itachi. It didn’t help that his brother threw his arms wide and hugged Naruto tightly while the moron sniveled and rubbed his fake tears onto his cardigan.

“Sasuke is so mean to me! *So mean*. Tell him he’s being a meanie!”

Flashbacks of an almost fifteen-year-old Naruto clinging to Itachi in much the same way after Sasuke had denied him to try driving his new moped without a license ran through Sasuke’s mind. Actually, he had memories of Naruto at about *every* age running to Itachi whenever he thought Sasuke had been a ‘meanie’. He was sure he only did it to annoy him and get pity points, so that Itachi would scold Sasuke even if Naruto was obviously the one at fault, while Naruto made grimaces at him.

“What did he do now?” Itachi asked, giving him a disappointed look that was so obviously fake that Sasuke gritted his teeth.

“Moron, stop behaving like a needy child in front of all our relatives.”

But Naruto only jutted out his lower lip at his comment, while Itachi shook his head at their antics.

“Naruto, when will you come to your senses and accept my proposal instead? You’ll be so much happier.”

Sasuke stared at his brother, marveling at the nonsense coming out of his mouth.

“Oh Itachi!” Naruto gasped, playing along and taking a hold of Itachi’s arms. “But what would Shisui say?”

“Don’t worry, he’s quite fond of you.”

Turning around to face Sasuke again, Naruto gave him a triumphant look.

“See? There are people here that *appreciate* me!” He hooked Itachi’s arms around his body, sticking his tongue out. “I’ll just stick to your brother tonight, because he’s *not* mean, unlike

you!”

“Bite me,” Sasuke hissed, leaving them behind and searching for someone sensible instead.

He found Shisui in the kitchen, and handed over their gift. It was weird to think that his cousin was already turning thirty.

“And where’s Naruto?” Shisui asked, placing the gift by a small pile already on the kitchen table.

“Bawling his eyes out in front of Itachi because I wouldn’t let him wear a t-shirt that says ‘life ends at thirty drink faster’.”

Shisui laughed, dark eyes sparkling and Sasuke just *knew* he would have complimented Naruto on wearing it if he’d had. Sasuke, on the other hand, wouldn’t be caught dead in public with Naruto wearing something like that.

“Well, maybe I should tell him it’s not so bad,” his cousin said, still laughing a bit as he shook his head, curly hair waving with the movement.

“I really don’t think that’s why he wore it,” he muttered, but Shisui patted his arm and was then distracted by some other relatives arriving.

Left alone, Sasuke leaned against the counter, figuring he’d let Naruto come to his senses before dealing with him. Crossing his ankles, he swept his gaze around the tiny kitchen. Shisui’s apartment really was cramped, but he supposedly liked it like that. Luckily they were on the bottom floor, and there was a small garden outside, otherwise there was no way the whole family would have fit. There were a lot of them, and Shisui was popular. He greeted a distant cousin as she passed, noting with surprise that she was pregnant. Well, not that he kept up to date with family affairs, anyway.

Unbidden, his thoughts strayed to the so called homework that Itachi had given him. Rubbing his cheek, he could feel the lack of sleep starting to get to him. He’d been thinking about it so much that he was certain he’d only managed to confuse himself, but even so the different trains of thoughts wouldn’t leave him alone.

“Glaring at innocent things as usual, I see.”

Raising his eyes from the floor, he rolled his eyes at Obito. Great, that meant Kakashi was around somewhere, too, as if he hadn’t gotten enough of him the past week at work.

“So,” Obito said, sounding secretive as he leaned in closer after settling against the counter by his side, “That whole thing with Naruto changing his facebook status, Kakashi and I have a bet but he refuses to tell me if you’ve said anything at work.”

“What the hell?”

Obito grinned at him, bumping their shoulders. Sometimes the older Uchiha was scarily alike Naruto.

“See, Kakashi is convinced that Naruto only changed it to try and get the hint across, but I’m leaning more towards it being an accident. I mean, since it can’t be real. Or is it?”

Obito’s eyes widened as Sasuke kept his face blank.

“Wait, don’t tell me you-“

Sasuke removed Obito’s hands that had gripped his upper arms, groaning slightly. He really didn’t feel like dealing with this crap.

“Why the hell would I have proposed to Naruto, it was just a dare.”

“Oh really,” Obito said, sounding relieved. “I was getting worried there for a while.”

“About what?” Sasuke knew he didn’t want to know, but he was too irritated not to ask.

“Well, that I might lose the bet! Hmm, I wonder if a dare would count as me winning...”

Closing his eyes, Sasuke pinched his nose. Why were his relatives so annoying? Scratch that, why was *everyone* around him so annoying?

“Sheesh, what did you say to him?”

At the sound of Naruto’s voice, Sasuke opened his eyes again. He was about to answer, but was distracted by the plate of appetizers shoved at him.

“What, I just asked about your new marriage status,” Obito defended himself with, Naruto spluttering in embarrassment.

“What?!” he choked out, “That was just a dare!”

Obito shrugged, grin still in place, but Sasuke ignored it in favor of eating. Now that he thought of it, he was kind of starving.

“Can’t we say it was an accident? Then I’ll win my bet against Kakashi.”

Pouting angrily, Naruto crossed his arms and mirrored their positions, leaning against Sasuke’s side as well as the counter.

“No way, it’s not my problem if you...” he trailed off, staring in resignation at something in the doorway. “Oh, great, I should have known.”

Sasuke followed his line of vision to find a cat, its fluffy white tail flicking from side to side as it observed the occupants in the room. Shisui appeared behind it, picking it up and walking over to them.

“Say hello to Shiro!”

The cat clearly didn’t look amused, but Sasuke still reached out a hand to pet its head, glancing at Naruto’s disapproving expression.



“Idiot, it’s not gonna hurt you.”

The blond huffed, much to the amusement of Sasuke’s relatives, but remained still.

“I’m not over the accident with your previous cat yet,” he grumbled to Shisui, who gave a hearty laugh and let Shiro down on the floor again.

“Play with fire and you’ll get burned,” Shisui teased, jumping out of the way when Naruto kicked at him. “Really Sasuke, how do you stand such a violent guy?”

“Your *cat* is violent!” Naruto retorted, eyeing it with horror as it stroked around his legs, leaving white hairs on his dark jeans.

Sasuke shared a look with Shisui, much to Naruto’s annoyance.

“Sasukeeee, save meee,” Naruto whined, placing his chin on his shoulder, his warmth pressing closer to Sasuke’s side.

Somehow, it felt rather nice.

“Well, good luck with that,” Obito said, leaving them and heading towards the living room.

“It’s okay, Naruto, if I had trained my cat to kill I wouldn’t pick you as my victim,” Shisui said in mock reassurance, Naruto only sniffing at him in response.

Still, Shisui picked the cat up again and carried it out of the kitchen, sending one last, teasing grin in Naruto’s direction before he disappeared. Sasuke resumed eating.

“I’ll get us something to drink,” Naruto said after a minute or so, straightening up. “What do you want?”

Sasuke hummed in thought, chewing on a small pie, and Naruto reached up to swipe off a few crumbs from the corner of his mouth. His thumb lingered, and when their eyes met, Sasuke had the strangest feeling that Naruto would kiss him. But his best friend averted his eyes, leaving him with his heart thumping quicker in his chest as he stared after him. He lifted his hand to absentmindedly rub the spot where Naruto had touched him, wondering why he suddenly felt cold.

It was just another layer of confusion to add to the mess inside his head. Movement caught his eyes, and he saw his pregnant relative, sitting by the kitchen table, husband standing next to her, casually rubbing her neck.

Naruto did that sometimes.

He swallowed, hard, Itachi’s words twisting and turning inside his head. So far, he’d been thinking about all the things that made them friends in his eyes. Should he... be thinking of something else?

Running a hand through his hair, he placed the almost empty plate next to him, his chest feeling heavy somehow. It was stupid, to compare himself and Naruto to a pregnant cousin

with a husband. Neither of them were girls and certainly not pregnant, but there was still something about the way he looked at her...

Sasuke needed a drink.

Inside the living room, he found his parents and Naruto, chatting comfortably. As he approached them, he noticed both his mother and Naruto glance at his hair.

"What did you do to your hair?" Naruto asked, frowning as he patted it back into place.

"I was just about to ask the same thing," his mother said, an affectionate smile on her face as Naruto stiffened for a second before shaking his head.

Sasuke merely huffed impatiently, relieving Naruto of one of the opened bottles in his hand and taking a swig from it. He could feel a prickling sort of sensation run down his neck from Naruto's fingers carefully combing through his hair, slightly embarrassed in front of his parents. Just another great example of him being babied.

"Do you know where Shisui went?" Fugaku asked, pursing his lips when Sasuke shrugged. "Well, I'll see if I can find him."

"Right, I'll stay here, I bet he's still walking around with that cat," Naruto muttered to himself, scowling at Sasuke when he elbowed him lightly. "Fine then, I'll go to the bathroom."

To distract himself from thoughts of Naruto, he started talking to his mother, Itachi eventually wandering over and joining them. A few minutes later, Shisui walked through the room to announce that dinner was served outside, sneaking an arm around Itachi's waist and pressing a kiss to his cheek when he reached them.

"I made that tomato sauce you like, Sasuke, should work well with the chicken," Shisui said, but Sasuke barely heard him.

This was far from the first time he'd seen Shisui and Itachi like this, but it struck him suddenly why things had felt so odd with Naruto lately. Because Naruto did the exact same thing as all the couples around them did, except no kisses. Could it still really count as platonic? Clenching and unclenching his fists, Sasuke found his brain to be a tumbling mess again. He just wished someone could tell him what everything meant, the touching, the looks, the lack of dates...

He didn't dare think it was the obvious answer, because he was scared of how he might react. It was better to shake it off for now, until he thought he could make some sense of his own feelings. Whatever they were. Even the word itself was sort of frightening.

"Sasuke?"

Itachi was frowning when he snapped out of it, but he shook his head and showed a weak smile.

"I guess I'd better go try it out then," he said, turning on his heels and walking outside.

It felt as if his mind was racing, too fast for him to follow. Things had been fine as they were, so why couldn't they just leave it like that? Why did Naruto have to act strangely, and Itachi say all those things...

Because no matter how he looked at it, Sasuke didn't think he was suited to be someone's boyfriend. He barely thought he was good enough for a best friend, but Naruto had convinced him enough times that he'd come to accept it over the years.

And then there was that small voice in the back of his head that had started the whole thing.

Walking out into the sunlight, he saw Naruto leaning against the wooden fence, joking with one of Sasuke's many aunts. His smile was bright, yet not as bright as he could remember from when they were alone. Running his eyes over Naruto, dressed in form-fitting jeans and a simple, long-sleeved green t-shirt with buttons at the top, he wondered if everyone found him as beautiful as Sasuke did.

Naruto was Naruto. That was a fact that Sasuke had always told himself, to try and explain why Naruto was different from everyone else. Because he was Naruto.

When blue eyes found his, it felt like something *shifted* inside of him. Something that had always been there, but now he could see it in a new light. He still had no idea what it was, or what it meant, but it was okay. He'd figure it out.

Moving on auto-pilot he helped himself to some food, overworked brain whirring as he struggled to come up with some sort of plan. He'd never enjoyed feeling helpless, unsure of his own self. He needed to *know*.

Hesitantly, he approached Naruto and his aunt, quietly standing beside him and nodding at his aunt. As if on cue, Naruto shuffled closer to him, so that their sides were touching. If he hadn't been holding a beer in one hand, and a plate in the other, Sasuke was sure that Naruto would have put his arm around him. Which felt like the natural thing for him to do, and Sasuke had to wonder how it was possible that he'd never thought of it before.

As he ate, he glanced at Naruto, his face, the expressions he made... when Naruto sent him a warm smile he felt as if it heated him up from inside, and he quickly stared down at his plate instead. He felt like he'd been acting strange his whole life and only just now realized it. Not that Naruto would smile like that when they were twelve, he supposed, which only made the whole thing worse. He forced down the nervous feeling in his stomach, eating without really tasting the food.

It would probably be bad if he didn't do something about this soon.

xxx

They'd gone out drinking after the dinner party, with Shisui, Itachi, Obito, Kakashi, and a few others. Somehow, Sasuke had managed to keep some distance to Naruto. He was a little worried over what he might do, and what Naruto might do because it felt like *something* was on the verge of happening. But it could be that it had been like this for a while, and Sasuke only noticed just now. Even so, he didn't want to do anything in front of everyone else, so he

had ignored the slightly upset looks Naruto had given him and spent a couple of hours sitting between Kakashi and the wall, Naruto diagonally across the table in the bar. As traumatizing as it had been to sit with Kakashi, he felt that he had needed it.

His thoughts were still all over the place, and it certainly didn't help that Naruto was drunker than him and kept touching him on the way home. Sasuke didn't mind it, but he felt more sensitive to the touches, because they fed his brain funny ideas. Like holding Naruto's hand, just to see how he'd react.

If Sasuke had been sober, he never would have thought these things. At least he wouldn't have contemplated acting on them. He had absolutely no understanding for lovey-dovey couples, but now he was forced to struggle with himself considering the level of physical closeness he'd realized existed between him and Naruto. It had been painfully clear to him, when sitting apart from Naruto, that the usual clinginess Naruto showed with him didn't happen with others, not even with Itachi.

Entering their apartment they'd both sobered up a bit, Naruto singing to himself as he dragged his feet towards the kitchen. Deciding not to follow, Sasuke went to the bathroom instead to splash some cold water on his face. He'd been thinking while at the bar, and running a finger over the pale skin on his neck where a faded bruise could be seen, he nodded at himself in the mirror.

Naruto touching him felt good. Naruto sucking on his neck had felt weird, but also good. So maybe, if something similar happened and Sasuke was more aware of things this time, he might be able to figure something out.

"Oi, Sas, I gotta pee!" Naruto yelled from the other side of the door, and bracing himself he exited, letting Naruto sweep past him.

He could feel his nerves tingling as he switched into a pair of sweatpants and an old t-shirt, grabbing his phone and starting to search as he sat on the bed. When Naruto entered, still humming to some tune that had stuck ever since they left the bar, he eased out of pants and shirt and climbed onto the bed next to Sasuke, curiously peeking over his shoulder.

"Watcha doin'?" he asked, hooking a leg over Sasuke's and making himself comfortable, their bare arms rubbing several times.

Taking a deep breath, Sasuke tilted the screen to show his friend.

"I thought we could try this again," he said, tense as he waited for Naruto's reaction.

"Seriously?! I thought you said it was stupid game."

Gnawing on his lower lip, Sasuke shrugged, hoping Naruto wasn't sober enough to realize how strange it was for Sasuke to suggest something like this.

"Yes but... I refuse to lose to you again," he said, hoping the sort of admittance that he'd 'lost' last time was enough to convince Naruto.

It wasn't the best idea, he knew that, but it was a whole lot better than just straight up asking if Naruto would kiss him just so he could figure out if he liked it or not.

"Ha," Naruto said, placing an arm around his shoulders and sinking a bit lower on the bed, fixing one of the pillows behind their backs before letting his hand casually run through the hairs on Sasuke's neck. "I can't believe you admitted that. Sure, bring it on!"

Feeling himself relax underneath Naruto's touch, Sasuke took a chance and clicked the mature version. If anything, it would speed things up, and he needed to get some sort of hints to go on before he either realized what he was doing or fell asleep.

"Your turn to start," Naruto reminded him, leaning his head against Sasuke's and yawning.

Starting the game, Sasuke blinked a few times at the question.

"Ooh," Naruto said, gripping his arm and shaking him a little. "I've always wanted to know what your guilty pleasure is."

Clearing his throat, Sasuke had no idea what his guilty pleasure was. What kind of pleasure was the question referring to, anyway? It didn't help that Naruto was back to playing with his hair... *Oh.*

"I guess one thing is..." he paused, wetting his lips and wondering why his heart sped up for something simple like this. "I guess you playing with my hair."

Naruto had stiffened, his fingers oh so slowly curling around a few strands.

"Huh," he breathed out, and there was an awkward silence for a few seconds until Naruto tapped a finger against his neck so that he clicked on the next question.

Reading the question, Sasuke was starting to question his sanity. He closed his eyes, feeling goose bumps forming on his skin as Naruto blew in his ear, warm with Naruto so close to him. It would be nice to just stay like that, wrapped up in Naruto's arm, Naruto's toes rubbing his foot now and then, lips brushing his ear causing a tiny tremble in his body.

"Umm, Sasuke, your turn..."

Peeking at the screen, Sasuke wasn't sure he wanted to know. It turned out to be another difficult question, which he should have been able to guess considering he'd chosen the mature game. It was just that, asking what turned him on the *most*, when Sasuke wasn't even sure what turned him on in the first place...

"I..." he swallowed, shifting uncomfortably. "I haven't really thought about it," he finished in a quick mumble.

Sure, he masturbated on occasion, but it's not as if there was anything specific he could think of that turned him on. And he mostly did it if he was feeling stressed and Naruto wasn't around to take his mind off things.

"Okay," Naruto said, and Sasuke was glad he didn't question it.

He did wonder what he thought of it, though, but got distracted by Naruto's question.

*What's your favorite type of porn?*

When Sasuke turned his head he found Naruto sporting a violent blush, looking at anything but him.

"I guess it's, umm, just fantasizing I think. Porn can be so... but some of it is good but it's like, it's better if I think of it myself, but uh... I'll just stop there," he finished lamely, letting out an embarrassed laughter.

"I think it asks for something more specific," Sasuke pointed out, earning a dirty look.

"Well that's what you'll get," Naruto muttered, switching to the next question, a dare.

Both of them stared at the screen for a long minute, then it clicked in Sasuke's brain and he felt like the hair at his neck stood up, a prickling sensation spreading throughout his body. Then he narrowed his eyes, feeling his competitive streak surface.

"If I do this, it'll beat the hickey you gave me, right?" he challenged, turning so there was some distance between them.

Naruto was making strangled noises, but Sasuke, heart in his throat, put his phone to the side and pushed at Naruto's chest so he relaxed and laid back further. He ignored the horrified look Naruto gave him. He was curious. He'd never done anything sexual with someone else, didn't really watch porn either, so to unbutton Naruto's shirt using only his mouth was something incredibly new and somehow exciting.

The problem was just that Naruto wasn't wearing a shirt. They stared at each other for a moment, Sasuke frowning and Naruto wide-eyed, then Naruto burst out laughing as Sasuke got up to find a shirt for him.

"Take this one," he said, annoyed, throwing the first one he'd found in Naruto's face.

It was a regular white one, probably belonging to Sasuke, and Naruto complained a bit that it was tight over the shoulders. Even so he buttoned it up complacently, then leaned back again, sucking on his lips as he waited for Sasuke to move.

Inhaling deeply, Sasuke positioned himself over Naruto's legs, leaning forwards on his hands and trying to figure out the easiest way to do this. It was, he concluded, to lie on top of Naruto and brace himself on his forearms.

Naruto was looking uncomfortable, switching between red-faced and slightly pale, gaze stuck on the wall. Sasuke wondered why, considering he never seemed to have a problem touching Sasuke. But maybe this was a bit embarrassing. Shaking all thoughts out of his head, Sasuke wriggled a little to be comfortable, making Naruto suck in a breath and tense up. Rolling his eyes at him, Sasuke got to work with the first button, just above the hem of Naruto's boxers.

It was more difficult than he'd expected. He fought the urge to use his hands, slowly moving up along Naruto's stomach and then chest. Not daring to look at Naruto's face, he kept his

gaze trained on the buttons, because he wasn't sure what expression he would find on his best friend's face. Neither was he sure of what expression he *wanted* to find.

Naruto's scent invaded his nostrils, and it was *safe* and *home* and Sasuke wanted to rub his face against Naruto's chest. How embarrassing. Fighting down the heat threatening to redden his cheeks, he finished with the last button. Along the way he'd been forced to slide up Naruto's body, and the intimate contact made him feel a little dizzy, as if it tried to pull him closer, make him lower himself to lie on top of the other. But he lifted himself up on his forearms, about to move away when blue eyes caught his, effectively trapping him in place.

He'd noticed Naruto's breathing to be rather quick and shallow, but now he seemed to hold his breath, and Sasuke held his as well. There was something coiling in his lower belly, white-hot and urgent, and Naruto's lips were *so close*.

Only when Naruto's eyes flashed in momentary pain before gently pushing him away, did Sasuke's brain catch up with his body's intentions. He really had been on the verge of kissing Naruto, and the thought brought an ache to his chest and a frown to his face as he sat up and moved next to the blond again. Maybe this was the hint he'd been waiting for? It felt as if something heavy had settled itself within him, throbbing as he reached for his phone again, causing his fingers to fumble when he pressed the button for a new question.

They were silent, tension crackling between them, and Sasuke hoped that Naruto wasn't thinking of ways to get out of this.

*Spend the next round sitting on someone's lap.*

"Umm, okay, I guess uh..."

There was a definite blush on Naruto's face as he sat on his knees, eyes darting between Sasuke and whatever else around them. Both of them did some awkward shifting, then they decided that it was easiest if Naruto sat between Sasuke's legs, so that Sasuke could lean over Naruto's shoulder to see the phone screen. It felt like Naruto hesitated as long as possible before his back settled against Sasuke's chest, and he hoped that Naruto wouldn't notice how his heartbeat sped up.

It was strange, because there had been a few instances where Sasuke had sat on Naruto's lap, though usually in a more platonic position. Sasuke wondered what to do with his hands. Sure, one still held the phone, but where to place it? He settled for letting it rest against Naruto's thigh, the other he kept next to him, nervously fiddling with a pillowcase. Every time he took a breath it was like sniffing Naruto, and even though he did smell a bit like sweat and beer it gave him the same fuzzy feelings as when he'd unbuttoned his shirt. It made him wonder why he didn't sleep facing Naruto more often. Or did he sleep like that a lot? He couldn't recall.

All thoughts came to an abrupt halt as he read the next question. Naruto started chuckling, and this time, nothing could stop the heat blooming all over his face and neck. Him, having thought of trying out lingerie? It would have been funny if the images hadn't invaded his brain what with Naruto pressing up close to him, shaking slightly with his laughter.

“Obviously not,” he choked out, quickly switching to the next one.

“Aww,” Naruto teased, and Sasuke hit his arm.

Naruto’s laughter got stuck in his throat however, and Sasuke peeked at the screen. Breath hitching, he stiffened as he waited for Naruto’s reaction, a sudden lump in his throat that he had to fight in order to swallow.

“Do we even have fruit?” Naruto asked, voice strangled and hands clasping in a nervous gesture.

“I don’t think so... do we have anything else?”

Naruto thought for a few seconds, then he leaned over towards the bedside table on his side of the bed, opening a drawer and pulling out a bag of smarties.

“One of these, maybe...?”

He wasn’t looking at Sasuke, so he was forced to grunt in acknowledgment after nodding at first. Naruto turned the bag upside down and accidentally spilled several smarties onto Sasuke’s leg, swearing quietly and moving away so he could pick them up with Sasuke’s help. Then Sasuke took one of them, hesitating because Naruto didn’t look very eager to go through with the dare.

“Umm, should we-“

“It’s okay,” Naruto snapped, raising his head to meet his eyes. Then he awkwardly turned to the side, before positioning himself on Sasuke’s lap again, this time facing him. “I totally won’t lose.”

“Right,” he mumbled, feeling silly as he stuck his tongue out before placing the smartie on top of it.

He tried not to flinch when Naruto leaned closer, his breath washing over Sasuke’s face and inspiring a funny feeling in his stomach. Keeping his eyes on Naruto’s forehead, he clenched his fists as he felt lips and teeth connect briefly with his tongue before the piece of candy was inside Naruto’s mouth instead. While the other man furiously chewed on it, Sasuke tried to gain control again. His entire body felt high-strung, changing between hot and burning, with Naruto’s weight pushing down on his legs. Even so, he felt a little cheated. It had been over almost before it registered in his brain, and narrowing his eyes he contemplated Naruto’s face, in particular his mouth.

From this short distance, it would be easy to reach. There was a flutter within his chest at the thought, but before he could act on it, Naruto slid off his lap and settled next to him again.

“Next question,” he muttered, glancing at Sasuke but hurriedly averting his eyes when he found him looking at him.

Letting out a breath, Sasuke forced his thumb to move, and could only stare at the words on the screen. He had to pinch Naruto’s butt. For some reason it felt worse than what they’d just



done, and he thinned his lips to try and keep his face in a neutral expression. Naruto gave a short, breathless laughter, lifting his ass a little so Sasuke could reach. He didn't pinch very hard, but Naruto bit his lip and made a strangled noise.

And, incredibly enough, Sasuke felt his groin stir. Was he getting turned on doing these things with Naruto? Heartbeat skyrocketing, he bent his knees upwards slightly, hunching a little over the phone. Suddenly, he didn't know if he could take any more of this. Naruto was still strangely quiet, and Sasuke felt anxious to find out why. Did he like it? Or was it just awkward? But he was sure that Naruto would tell him to stop if it felt awful...

At the next question, he could see Naruto soundlessly forming the words as he read it.

*If your crush was standing right here in front of you, what would you want him/her to do?*

Unable to tear his eyes away from his friend, Sasuke watched Naruto swallow and scratch his neck. There was a flicker of emotions across his tan features, as if he was fighting with himself over something. It struck Sasuke that Naruto might have a crush that he was thinking of right now.

It hurt. His throat hurt, too, and he rubbed a slightly sweaty palm against his thigh.

"Well?" he asked, sounding testy, biting the inside of his cheek when Naruto startled.

"Sorry I just..." Naruto bent his knees against his chest, hugging them as he bore his eyes into Sasuke's as if searching for something. Then he looked down, morose all of a sudden. "If they told me my feelings are returned, that would be..."

Sasuke's eyes widened. So Naruto had a crush? It felt as if his entire body burned, his skin crawling as his mind ran through possible candidates. One of their friends? Someone at Naruto's work places? No one came to mind, but he was afraid to ask. Even so, by the way Naruto stared hard at the mattress, it felt as if he was waiting for Sasuke to voice the question. As in, why had he never mentioned there was someone?

Struggling with a shaky breath, Sasuke, at a loss for what else to do, read the next question directed at him.

"Would I kiss the person next to me?" he whispered, heart slamming against his ribs as he stared at the words.

Would he? Rationally speaking, Naruto was his best friend so if it was a dare, of course he *could* kiss him. He gripped the phone tightly, his free hand curling around the sheet so that it wrinkled. If Naruto had someone, a crush, would he really want Sasuke to kiss him then?

Turning towards Naruto, he found him frozen, staring unseeingly at the wall in front of him. Unsure of what to do, but feeling pained because Naruto sure looked pained, he dropped his phone and raised his hand, brushing aside a few of Naruto's bangs.

All that happened was Naruto tensing up even more, fists clenching and the shirt he still wore straining over his shoulders. Sasuke brushed his thumb along Naruto's temple, lungs aching as his head was pounding.

“Naruto...”

Head jerking towards him, Naruto’s eyes were wide and vulnerable, shining in the dim light. Fingers tracing Naruto’s jaw, Sasuke subconsciously moved closer, his body feeling heavy, breaths shallow. Naruto’s gaze dropped to his lips, and something lurched violently inside Sasuke. Wetting his lips, he brought their noses close enough to bump, lips just about to brush...

# Looking for us

## Chapter Notes

Final chapter! It's past midnight and I can't believe I pushed through and actually finished it. This chapter has been haunting me for a long time, but I'm finally pleased enough to post. I'm gonna proofread tomorrow though, so please excuse any grammatical errors. Sorry for the bad jokes, haha...

Some of you were vigilant enough to notice the preview on tumblr, to the rest I'm sorry it took ages considering the cliffhanger and everything.

If you were looking for steamy smut I'm sorry to disappoint.

The song for chapter four and the title is "Looking for us" by Kite. They're a Swedish little duo and I think they broke up, which is very sad. Their songs are perfect for writing though.

I hope you enjoyed this story, thank you for reading!

*“But we were lost  
Looking for us  
Oh we were there  
And yet we were runaways”*

xxx

In the kitchen, Naruto stood with his elbows on the counter, hands gripping his hair as he tried to calm his breathing. The look in Sasuke's eyes as he'd pushed him away and scrambled off the bed... He didn't know what to make of it.

Staring out the window, faint light already on the horizon to announce early morning, he tried his best not to feel upset. All it did was make him feel worse, however, and with a groan he rubbed his face. Sasuke had been about to kiss him, and Naruto had panicked. He didn't know *why* he'd even initiated something like that, because the question had clearly not been a dare. It was bad enough he'd almost gotten hard just from Sasuke opening his shirt. He knew that, had he allowed Sasuke to kiss him, there was no way he could hold back.

He'd rather Sasuke found out in a less shocking, impulsive way. Obviously Sasuke had to be drunk, not that it explained anything, not really. But Naruto was scared that he would wake

up the next morning and dismiss it all like some drunken experiment. Just thinking about it *hurt*.

It just felt like his mind was spinning out of control. He must have already gone overboard on the way home, because Sasuke was so damn cute, and because for some reason Sasuke had kept his distance at the bar and Naruto had to make sure it wasn't because of touching. To put it shortly, Sasuke had been acting kind of strange the past days, and when he had suggested doing the truth and dare again, he'd been unable to keep himself from hoping, wondering if maybe Sasuke had started to feel something for him.

The worst part had to have been earlier at the party, when Sasuke's aunt had asked him if he wasn't planning on proposing soon. He thanked whatever deity was out there for the fact that Sasuke had showed up several minutes later. It was bad enough that most of Sasuke's family already thought or assumed they were a couple, he didn't need to hear Sasuke deny it to his face.

God, he was way too tired and drunk for this crap. Angry with himself he blinked back the threat of tears, because there was no way, *no way*, he'd stand here in the kitchen crying because Sasuke had tried to kiss him and it scared him.

The sound of bare feet approaching had him freeze, and when Sasuke turned on the light he could see him reflected in the window pane. He looked serious, staring at him in silence, and Naruto didn't know what to do if that silence wasn't broken.

"What," he forced out, ignoring how hoarse he sounded.

"I'm sorry," Sasuke replied, voice subdued but dark eyes earnestly meeting his through the reflection. "I crossed the line. I didn't mean to."

Naruto raised his eyebrows at this, turning around to give Sasuke an incredulous look. Of all things he might have expected Sasuke to say, it wasn't that. Lowering his gaze to the floor, Sasuke shifted his weight between his feet, one hand coming up to hold his other arm.

"I won't do it again."

There was something in Sasuke's voice that made Naruto's breath hitch, some hint of disappointment that sent his heart into overdrive again, though pain filled his chest. Sasuke glanced up at him again, expression hesitant.

"I'll forget about it, so..."

And there it was, those nightmare words, even if the setting was entirely different, and maybe Sasuke didn't even regret anything, but even so Naruto couldn't help it. There was a painful lump lodged in his throat and he couldn't breathe properly, fingers gripping the edge of the counter until he thought he might break it.

"Don't," he pleaded before he could stop himself, biting his lips as Sasuke held his gaze in his.

Maybe it was obvious from his expression, maybe Sasuke finally put two and two together, but slim eyebrows rose slightly as dark eyes widened in understanding. Naruto turned his head to the side. He refused to run away, but he couldn't face Sasuke like this. Instead, he angrily swiped at the corners of his eyes, gritting his teeth. When Sasuke came closer, he hid his face with both arms.

"I'm okay," he sniffled, but insisting on it only caused all his bottled up emotions to spill over even more.

He didn't think he'd cried for real in front of Sasuke since he was sixteen and broke a leg while skiing. But right now his feelings were a mess, and so was he, probably.

When Sasuke's hand awkwardly stroked his neck, he was almost shocked enough to stop crying. Hands pressing against his face, he leaned against Sasuke's shoulder and let it all out. Sasuke kept caressing his neck, and Naruto didn't know if it made things better or worse, but Sasuke half hugging him was reassuring. At least Sasuke didn't think any different of him.

After a couple of minutes, the tears finally subsided enough for him to breathe properly again, and he raised his head to wipe them off with the sleeves of the shirt.

"Shit, I'm a mess," he mumbled, giving a half-hearted little laugh as Sasuke's eyes narrowed.

"Stupid. You could have talked to me, you know. If there's someone you like, I'll either punch them for making you cry or make sure you forget about them."

It felt like time stopped, Naruto pausing his wrist even as it pressed against his eye. What. The. Hell?

"Wait, what?" he asked, staring in surprise with one eye at a scowling Sasuke.

"That's why you didn't want to kiss, right? And why you're not dating. There's someone you wish was reciprocating your feelings, so--"

"Oh my god!"

Sasuke looked slightly put off at being interrupted, but Naruto felt his shoulders start to shake with laughter instead of from crying. Or maybe he'd cry too.

"Sasuke, that's you! You're the one I, *shit*."

Realizing he had, actually, *confessed*, Naruto pressed his hands against the sides of his head, staring at Sasuke in slight horror. His best friend stood frozen, eyes widening. It would have been comical if the situation hadn't been so crazy. He could feel a white-hot burn of nervousness rushing through his limbs, but then Sasuke *sighed*.

"What the fuck, what's with that sigh?" he accused, but Sasuke only pursed his lips and eyed him for a couple of seconds, as if Naruto's feelings were just another annoying thing.

Like when he ate ramen for breakfast, he got the exact same look every time.

Just as he was about to open his mouth and complain, Sasuke's expression turned embarrassed instead. Which was strange, in itself. But the strangest part was...

Sasuke was *kissing* him.

Pale hands clasped his head, and Sasuke's eyes were closed as his lips softly touched Naruto's. It was so sudden that Naruto didn't know how to react. Should he kiss back? What did the kiss even mean?

Before he could get his thoughts in order, Sasuke leaned back to look at him, searching his eyes. Then he bumped their foreheads together, and Naruto swore his heart *exploded*, his struggling lungs sucking in a desperate breath.

"I think we're a bit too tired for this," Sasuke mumbled, hands still in place, warm and secure against Naruto's tingling skin.

"I..." Honestly, Naruto had to agree. It had to be almost four-thirty by now, and his brain felt sluggish. He still couldn't believe Sasuke had kissed him, even if it was a small, barely-there thing. "Yeah."

Even after he'd agreed, Sasuke kept him in place. His breath felt hot against his mouth, and slowly, in case quick movements startled his friend, he raised his arms that he'd lowered in shock earlier, and wrapped his fingers loosely around Sasuke's wrists. It was surreal to stand like that, right there in the kitchen where he had so many domestic memories of Sasuke. He felt too raw, too confused after crying and confessing and *that kiss*.

Naruto wanted another one. Closing his eyes he took a deep breath, dreading going to bed because he'd wake up in the morning without being sure if it was real or just a dream.

"You okay?" Sasuke asked, probably frowning.

Feeling a weary smile tug at his lips, he squeezed Sasuke's wrists.

"I have no idea. Honestly? I feel like I might pass out any second."

Sasuke was silent for a few seconds, but Naruto didn't dare open his eyes yet. Sasuke's left thumb slowly caressed his cheek, and Naruto couldn't breathe.

"Shh, relax. It's okay."

Swallowing with some difficulty, he forced his eyes open, just enough to peek at his best friend. The look in dark eyes was concerned, causing Naruto's stomach to coil with a mixture of relief and pure, raw affection.

Sasuke kissed him again.

This time was just as surreal as the previous one. Naruto stood still, the thought running through his mind that the light press of lips against his felt rather awkward, to be honest, both of them just standing there trying to breathe through their noses.

Regardless of that, Naruto felt like his body had vaporized and now floated up towards the ceiling, and someone was blowing through the smoke that was his body so that his feelings tossed and turned and were swept away because *Sasuke was kissing him*.

Oh, if only he would continue forever. It was just a touch, no movement, Naruto's hands shaking slightly as they held on to Sasuke. Just a touch but it was *everything*.

When Sasuke leaned back, far enough for their eyes to meet again, Naruto panted heavily. His lungs were straining for air and his heart beat a staccato in his chest. He'd never felt so awful yet blissfully relieved at the same time.

"Sleep," Sasuke ordered, but his voice wavered slightly and Naruto's skin burned.

He opened his mouth to speak, but nodded when realizing he seemed to have misplaced his voice for the time being. Sasuke took a step back and Naruto couldn't help a small move as if to follow, pale hands sliding off his face and ceasing contact. He wanted to explain himself, wanted to ask what Sasuke meant by kissing him, wanted to hold him close and never let go.

Sasuke took a step backwards, eyeing him as if worried he'd collapse any second. Maybe he would. His knees were definitely wobbly enough as he took a hesitant step forwards, but the other man turned around and led the way.

"I'll just-" Naruto choked out, desperate to head into the bathroom to at least wash his face, and, well, maybe bang his head against the wall until he passed out due to overload of emotions.

"Don't be stupid," Sasuke disagreed, pausing so that Naruto came close enough for him to reach a hand out to grab his arm.

Pulling him along, Sasuke quickly guided him to the bed and all but threw him onto it, sending him a glare as if to dare him to try anything besides falling asleep. Half sitting, Naruto stared wide-eyed as Sasuke closed the door like always, then walked over to the window and made sure it was only slightly open to let some of the fresh morning air inside before pulling down the blinds.

In the darkness, he could hear the quiet sounds of Sasuke's feet, then feel the dip of the mattress as he climbed onto the bed. Sasuke had, out of habit, turned off the lights as he'd left the bedroom, and Naruto felt a surge of affection at the thought of something so ordinary. He rubbed his face, moving when Sasuke pushed down the covers and lying down after removing the few extra pillows they'd used to prop themselves up against the headboard.

It could have been like any other time they went to bed, except this time Sasuke had kissed him, and Naruto had confessed his feelings.

The thought struck him, like he'd forgotten about it but now it came back full force, the insanity of it all running through his mind. He'd told Sasuke. Well, implied, but Sasuke must have understood. It felt awkward, lying there and trying to stay in control, wanting to reach out to Sasuke so badly yet frightened to move at all. Thoughts of *why* and *how* and *what if*

plagued him, until he heard the sheets rustle and soon after felt a tentative touch against the back of his hand.

Sucking in a breath he turned towards Sasuke, almost violently, grasping his hand and curling up close to his side. He buried his nose in the fabric covering Sasuke's shoulder, feeling the strain of the shirt he still wore for some reason. Shifting his legs, they brushed up against Sasuke's sweatpants, and he would have laughed at how ridiculous it all was if he wasn't struggling enough just to force air down his lungs. Amazingly enough, Sasuke tilted his head so that his jawline rested against the top of Naruto's head, fingers slowly returning the grip Naruto held them with.

Sasuke was silent, but Naruto didn't need him to say anything. He only needed this, for now, the warmth of his body and the reassuring hold on his hand. His scent, and the safety of covers and darkness.

Yes, he could sleep like this.

Eventually.

xxx

When Naruto woke up, he was alone in bed. This wasn't unusual, considering Sasuke usually got up early for either lectures or work, and insisted on rarely ever sleeping in. Sasuke sure had some incredible discipline, in Naruto's opinion.

Curled up on his side, he brought the covers even closer around himself. He didn't particularly want to think about last night, his brain feeling a bit sluggish from the lack of sleep. Still, the memories were forcing themselves upon him, and though they felt a bit surreal and everything was still a mess, Naruto couldn't help but bring a hand up to touch his lips. He knew that Sasuke wouldn't do something like that out of pity, or simply to comfort him. It wasn't a love confession in return, but it was *something*, and it was enough to give Naruto the strength to get out of bed.

He found Sasuke in the kitchen, the smell of pancakes hitting him once he entered. Pausing in the doorway, he leaned on the doorpost and watched him for a minute. A helpless smile formed on his face, because no matter what happened, Sasuke was still Sasuke, and something as seemingly simple as pancakes wasn't simple at all.

"I can't believe you're making pancakes," he said, and Sasuke sent him a glance before flipping one over.

"I see you finally got rid of the shirt," was all he answered, looking as calm as ever.

Naruto wanted to go over to him and hug him from behind. He could feel the familiar urge in his chest, the itch in his fingers, and it struck him that maybe, there wasn't anything stopping



him from doing so.

Sasuke's back was warm against his bare chest, and he buried his nose in Sasuke's neck as he squeezed his waist. Amazingly enough, after a brief hesitation, Sasuke tilted his head so that it connected with Naruto's in an affectionate gesture. It only lasted a few seconds, but Naruto's stomach had plenty of time to explode in tingles.

"Go sit down, I need my body," Sasuke told him, struggling a little to move one pancake from the frying pan to the plate on the counter.

Making a whining noise of complaint, Naruto rubbed his nose against Sasuke's neck and squeezed him harder. With a sigh, Sasuke reached up to run his fingers through his hair, causing warmth to fill him up all the way from his toes. Then Sasuke tugged at it and he reluctantly leaned back.

"Fine," he muttered, letting go and walking over to the small kitchen table.

He took a seat so that he could watch Sasuke, leaning his chin on his crossed arms. There was something so endearing about Sasuke in the morning, still dressed in what he slept in and hair a mess, a look of tired concentration on his face as he poured more batter into the pan. When Sasuke glanced at him, he received a thoughtful frown.

"You always look at me like that," he said, causing Naruto to straighten up in his seat, "You look like a dork."

"Like how?" he asked nervously, rubbing his palms against his thighs.

"Like you're..." Sasuke trailed off, his expression changing from thoughtful to deadpan.

"Right," he mumbled, turning back to the stove and hiding his face behind his hair.

"What the hell?" Naruto's heart felt heavy against his ribs all of a sudden. "You can't just stop mid-sentence like that!"

He glared at his best friend, arms crossed. Then he sucked in a breath when Sasuke turned towards him again and there was a light pink spreading across his cheeks. Sasuke looked annoyed, however, lips pursing as he turned off the stove and then stalked over to where Naruto sat.

"Umm, Sasuke?"

Sasuke had placed himself on the table right in front of him, one foot on Naruto's chair next to his thigh, elbow on his own thigh as he leaned into Naruto's personal space.

"Are you really in love with me?" he asked, face scrunched up in annoyance the way it always did whenever Sasuke tried to hide his embarrassment.

Naruto opened his mouth but no sound came out. Sasuke was just too close, his breath fanning over Naruto's face, and if he said it wasn't distracting to have Sasuke's eyes boring into his then he'd be lying his teeth off.

“Well?” Sasuke insisted, but his gaze flickered down to Naruto’s mouth, and Naruto was already pressed against the back of his chair so he really had no choice but to push Sasuke away.

Catching himself with his hands on the table, Sasuke’s eyes narrowed for a second. Considering Naruto’s face was burning up, it wasn’t surprising that Sasuke soon relaxed into awkwardness instead.

“Sorry, I just...”

“No, I’m sorry,” Sasuke interrupted him, averting his eyes. “It’s just, I don’t understand how I never noticed. I feel so stupid.”

“It’s okay.” Naruto offered him a small smile, placing his hand on Sasuke’s ankle and gently caressing the skin showing between sock and pants. “I kind of made it a point not to let you know.”

“But why?” Sasuke asked, a deep wrinkle between his eyebrows as he straightened up, but kept his distance compared to earlier.

“I don’t know, I just didn’t know how to tell you, and if you didn’t feel the same I’d rather just stay best friends than have my heart broken. I chickened out every time I tried.”

Sasuke was staring at him, and Naruto stared back. There was also the fact that since Sasuke’s family all thought they were together, he hadn’t been looking forward to make Sasuke catch on and have to explain everything to them. Still, it felt so relieving to have it all out in the open now, even if he wasn’t sure what Sasuke thought of it.

“I was more wondering why the hell you’d be in love with me, but fine, I get it. You’re an idiot but Itachi was right this time, I’m even more of an idiot.”

Eyes blinking rapidly in surprise, Naruto bit his lip as Sasuke’s hand reached out to run light fingers along the side of his face. The touch caused his heart to hammer against his ribs, and he held Sasuke’s ankle tightly. He hadn’t noticed Sasuke coming closer, but this time he didn’t try to push him away. When Sasuke’s mouth connected with his, he closed his eyes and let out a sigh through his nose. It was sweet but short, Sasuke’s lips dragging along his once before applying a bit of pressure. It was probably for the better that it was so short, since Naruto felt dizzy after separating.

“So, umm...” he started, not sure what to do, nervously wiggling his feet and feeling hot all over.

“Look,” Sasuke told him, holding out his hand and patiently waiting for Naruto to take it, fingers intertwining in a slow, curious motion. “I’m not too sure on this romance thing, but I know that you’re my most important person outside my family, hell you’re probably part of the family, and-“

He took a deep breath before continuing, seemingly oblivious to the painful knots in Naruto’s stomach forming during the delay.

“Well, kissing you doesn’t feel bad, and it’s not like I’ve ever felt like I needed someone else in my life.”

Sasuke took another pause, but he didn’t continue when Naruto’s eyes watered, and instead he pursed his lips to try and fight down the blush threatening to spread across his entire face.

“You don’t have to declare your love for me or anything,” Naruto said, trying to sound joking but voice breaking slightly. “I’m happy just with this.”

He sent a brilliant smile Sasuke’s way, pleased when he received an embarrassed but happy one in return. His chest felt like it was doing some heavy reconstruction work, trying to tear down all the worries and what ifs and hidden feelings. There was something strong inside him, something that had always been there and went way beyond simple romance, slowly blooming into its full size with Sasuke holding both his hand and gaze with all the affection that Naruto had spent most of his life cherishing.

Sasuke meant so much to him, and always had. He’d always known that if he confessed, Sasuke wouldn’t shun him. He’d been more worried for his own sake, dealing with the aftermath of a confession that didn’t have the result he dreamt of. Knowing now that Sasuke was trying his best to return those feelings in his own way was simply...

“I’m so happy you took my orange crayon that time in kindergarten and told me it was an ugly color so we could become rivals and then friends,” he choked out, knowing he was tearing up but doing nothing to stop it.

“Ah, that,” Sasuke responded in an awkward tone of voice, and now his ears were red despite his obvious efforts. “I was just jealous because the teacher told you that orange was such a creative color for the ocean.”

Naruto burst out laughing, and once he calmed down, he leaned his temple against Sasuke’s knee.

“I’m pretty sure she said that because it looked ugly as fuck,” he snorted, Sasuke giving him an agreeing shrug.

“Well it did, why do you think I got mad?”

Letting out another part snort, part sob, Naruto brought Sasuke’s hand closer to himself so he could hold it properly.

“There’s no way you can remember how it looked,” he disagreed, grabbing a part of Sasuke’s sweatpants to dry the few tears that had escaped.

“Gross. And what do *you* know. I even remember the look of rage on your stupid face.”

Naruto smiled again, his cheeks beginning to ache at this point.

“You like my stupid face,” he said, like he usually did whenever Sasuke said something like that.

“It’s still stupid,” Sasuke assured him, as usual.

“Dammit, you’re a jerk,” Naruto muttered, hitting his leg and sending him a fake glare.

“Hey, no hitting if you want pancakes,” Sasuke complained, but pulled his leg up to push on Naruto’s shoulder with his foot.

So he did the only sensible thing in this situation: he attempted to tickle Sasuke.

“Oh no you don’t!” Sasuke warned him, flailing his feet as Naruto tried to get them both at the same time, falling back to lean on his forearms under the assault.

“Admit you like my face!”

“I already did!” Sasuke tried, but Naruto was having none of that.

“Repeat after me,” he ordered as he tried to catch at least one of Sasuke’s evasive feet.

“Naruto’s face is so pretty, the prettiest I’ve ever seen!”

“Like hell I will,” Sasuke shot back, now crawling backwards across the table with Naruto following him.

“It’s so pretty in fact,” he continued, struggling to hold down Sasuke’s left leg while the other man tried to wriggle out of his grip, “I can’t seem to think straight every time I see it.”

“So funny,” Sasuke gritted out, grabbing Naruto’s shoulders in a last attempt to shake him off.

After a brief wrestling match, Sasuke ended up on top. He hadn’t entirely won however, since Naruto still held his leg in a secure grip, forcing him to sit at an awkward angle on his stomach.

“Come on, admit my face is pretty enough to sing serenades over it,” Naruto teased, trying not to think of other uses for this particular position.

“I thought you were in love with *me*, not yourself,” Sasuke taunted, causing Naruto to roll his eyes.

When Sasuke shifted a little to sit more comfortably, Naruto couldn’t help but cough a bit at the unintentionally erotic image. There had been many instances where Naruto had imagined Sasuke on top of him, grinding down against his-

He really needed to stop there.

“You’re not thinking indecent things, are you?” Sasuke asked with an eyebrow cocked superiorly, a smirk spreading across his face when Naruto’s face exploded with heat.

“Bastard! I wasn’t!” he growled, slapping Sasuke’s chest which really wasn’t helping him at all.

“You’re such a bad liar,” Sasuke drawled, and Naruto was about to retort when a slightly evil glint flashed through Sasuke’s dark eyes. “Anyway,” he continued, sliding slightly further back down Naruto’s body, and closer to dangerous places. “We should get to work on eating those pancakes if we want to eat them warm.”

What a perfectly innocent sentence, if it weren’t for the fact that Sasuke had slowly dragged his free hand down Naruto’s naked chest, leaving it spread across his stomach where it felt much too warm and exciting. Sadly, Sasuke used it as leverage to skip Naruto’s crotch and instead sat on his upper thighs.

Or well, *sadly* was entirely the wrong word Naruto realized, as Sasuke’s new placement gave him ample room to see the hard-on he was sporting. Horrifyingly embarrassing was much better.

“Well, look at that,” Sasuke commented calmly, and Naruto brought his arms up to cover his face.

“I can’t believe this,” he groaned, trying to lie as still as possible, which wasn’t easy with Sasuke’s warmth against him, not to mention Sasuke *still* hadn’t moved his hand.

“Hn,” was all Sasuke said as warning before he dragged his nails along Naruto’s waistband.

With a violent lurch Naruto sat up to grab Sasuke’s hand, wild-eyed as his mouth tried to form words.

“Not good?” Sasuke asked, biting on his lips.

“Not goo-, not-, not *good*?! Holy fuck, Sasuke I thought I was gonna *cum*!”

It was only now that he realized their close proximity, Sasuke still on his lap and looking down at him as he tried to calm his breathing.

“That’s funny, I seem to recall a few times you’ve insisted on being able to last for hours.”

If Naruto had felt embarrassed before, that was nothing compared to the pure mortification he felt now. *How* did Sasuke manage to always find the worst things to say?

“That was-“ he started to defend himself with, cutting himself short when he realized he couldn’t really think of something to say.

“A lie?” Sasuke helpfully provided with, and Naruto jutted out his lower lip in displeasure.

“It was back when we were teenagers! How do you even remember these things? Do you have like, a diary for stupid shit I say?”

“Not really, you just repeat yourself often enough for it to stick.”

“Oh shut up!” Naruto snapped at him, feeling a bit sorry for himself now.

All Sasuke did was shrug and slide off Naruto's lap, landing gracefully on the floor, venturing back to the stove once he was down.

"What are you doing?" Naruto demanded, still hard and now cold as well.

"I told you we need to work on the pancakes."

"Well, what am I supposed to do then?"

Sasuke shrugged again, but Naruto could *see* the amused smirk dancing across his lips.

"I'm sure you can find a way to entertain yourself."

"What, like jerk off?" Naruto asked before he could stop himself.

Throwing an innocent look over his shoulder, Sasuke started stirring the pancake batter.

"I don't know, is that what people do in relationships? One person jerks off while the other makes pancakes? Doesn't sound as difficult as I thought, but a little unequal maybe."

"Oh yeah, I forgot, totally happens every day in relationships. Well I'll just go ahead then."

Sasuke poured some batter into the pan, making sure it spread evenly. *How* he could possibly be so calm and uncaring when Naruto was close to exploding was a mystery. And unfair, too. Naruto didn't even know what to make of the whole 'in a relationship' thing either. Were they dating now? Did Sasuke actually want to be boyfriends? Naruto wanted to ask but he didn't know how. When Sasuke turned slightly to watch him, he felt himself flush all the way down his neck and to his ears.

"Stop giving me that look!" he spluttered, pointing at Sasuke.

"What look? This one?"

Sasuke leaned against the counter, an expectant look on his face, as if he was waiting for Naruto to shove his hand down his pants and start beating off. Actually, the thought was very much... *arousing*.

"Yeah," he replied awkwardly, swallowing with some difficulty. "I'm not gonna start jerking off."

"No? And here I was looking forward to it."

Sasuke was joking. He had to be! But Sasuke was still watching him, as if daring him to leave and take care of it on his own. And, quite frankly, it was doing nothing to help Naruto's little problem. Nervously wetting his lips he entertained the idea in his mind, imagining Sasuke's eyes on him as he pleased himself... A shiver ran up his spine, and his fingers tensed against the tabletop. He still sat on top of it, having turned so he could face Sasuke.

Caught in Sasuke's gaze, he slowly slid forwards so he sat with his legs hanging off the edge on the side closest to the stove.

“Don’t give me ideas,” he said in an attempt to joke, but all Sasuke did was lower his eyes to his crotch, and then take his time on his way back up to Naruto’s face.

“Maybe another time,” Sasuke said to contradict his gaze, which caused Naruto to let out a quiet sigh.

“Yeah, okay.” Then he blinked, processing what Sasuke just said. “Wait, you mean...?”

Sasuke shrugged, but it was a shrug that let Naruto know that yes, Sasuke might want to do that some other time.

“Huh,” he said dumbly, not sure if he should feel a little sexually frustrated, or if he should feel awed because Sasuke had kissed him, had turned him on, and now admitted in his own Sasuke-way that the chances were high that another time, one thing would lead to another.

“Come here,” Sasuke told him, patting the counter next to him while at the same time flipping a pancake.

How did he even do things simultaneously like that.

Still blushing, still hard, Naruto went over to stand next to Sasuke. He wished he’d had pockets so he could put his hands in them. To his surprise, Sasuke pecked his lips and tapped two fingers against his hipbone.

“Why don’t you hold that thought and we can work something out later.”

“Later,” Naruto echoed, and hoped Sasuke would kiss him again.

“Mm. I’m starving, aren’t you?”

Whether or not Naruto was starved for food was debatable, but now that he was cooling down a bit he realized that Sasuke was right. There were more important things to get used to first, and considering how sudden and unexpected his confession had been, it was only fair that Sasuke got some time to think about it. After all, Naruto had spent ten years getting used to the idea of them together.

“Hey, Sasuke,” he started hesitantly, after having watched the brunet finish with another pancake. “If I’m pushy, tell me, okay? I’m probably gonna be a little out of it for a couple of days.”

“Out of it?”

Sasuke was frowning, but Naruto smiled at him. He wondered if he’d ever reach a point where he’d look at Sasuke and not stop and think how amazingly happy he was to have him in his life.

“Yeah. I mean, on an average day, I wanna kiss you like, a million times, so now that I know you won’t hate it, I might go overboard.”

Sasuke tilted his head in thought, his weight on the elbow he'd placed on the counter, looking that casual level of cool that Naruto had always admired.

"You like kissing that much?"

He could feel his face heat up again, and defiantly crossed his arms.

"Well excuse me for wanting to kiss you," he muttered, eyeing Sasuke warily when he snorted and walked closer.

"Hmm. I guess I'll get used to it sooner or later," Sasuke mused, running a hand through Naruto's hair, which was all kinds of pleasant. "Just give me a warning if we're in public."

"Sure!" Naruto happily agreed, snaking his arms around Sasuke's waist to hug him.

"And nothing indecent in front of my family," Sasuke added, not objecting when he buried his face in the crook of his neck.

"I'll try," he said in mock innocence, grinning when Sasuke tugged at his hair.

He pressed a kiss to Sasuke's neck, and another one, making loud kissing noises as he moved up to his ear.

"That tickles," Sasuke complained, but didn't sound like he disliked it.

"That was the point," Naruto lied, smiling wide and leaning in to bump their noses.

"Still a bad liar," Sasuke grumbled, but seemed content to stare into Naruto's eyes, noses still pressing against each other.

"Hey, Sasuke?"

"What," Sasuke sighed.

"Come pick me up after work?"

Sasuke's stare turned hard, eyebrows disappearing underneath his fringe.

"Awesome, thanks!" Naruto grinned and gave him a quick kiss, satisfied to see his best friend slightly embarrassed as he wiped his mouth discreetly. "Now, how about those pancakes?"

Sasuke rolled his eyes.

xxx

It was rare for Sasuke to feel nervous. He had, admittedly, felt slightly nervous when he'd heard Naruto walk into the kitchen, wondering what he was going to say. He didn't mind



being in a relationship though, because he figured he and Naruto would work something out. The whole morning before Naruto had woken up he'd been thinking. Mostly, he'd been thinking that he was kind of stupid for not realizing Naruto's feelings earlier, and the rest was spent contemplating what the difference really would be if they got together.

Remembering Naruto's evident arousal he guessed that the physical department would be what changed the most. The idea didn't bother him, and while he'd never really felt attracted to anyone, he trusted Naruto and knew he would only do things that Sasuke agreed with. So, in some ways, he was curious and looking forward to trying things out at some point.

But, there were more pressing matters at hand before any of that. Hence the reason he could feel a nervous coil in his stomach as he selected the correct number on his phone.

Three signals, then his mother's voice greeted him.

"Hey," he said, trying to come up with the best way to tell her. Itachi, the devil, deserved to find out through gossip. "No, everything's fine, we got home safely."

*"Well it's always nice to hear from you,"* his mother happily chirped. *"Is there anything you want to talk about?"*

"Yeah," he stalled, wetting his lips. "It's about Naruto."

*"Oh? Did he do something?"*

"No. Well. You see, we're, well, he and I are in a relationship."

*"Yes?"*

Sasuke did a little double-take. His mother didn't sound surprised at all. It was one thing for Itachi to tease him like he had, but for his mother to expect something *more* besides that revelation?

"That's it. What I wanted to tell you, I mean," he mumbled, picking tiny feathers out of a decorative pillow on the couch.

*"Oh,"* Mikoto said, sounding confused. *"Well, honey, I thought you knew that we already knew?"*

It dawned on Sasuke then. His brother's laughter. His mother's confusion. Why all his friends talked about Naruto in reference to their own relationships. They all knew... except there hadn't been any relationship to know of.

"Oh, um, yeah, of course. I just wanted to... make sure."

Mikoto let out a pearly laughter, and he knew that had she been there, she would have caressed his cheek with a fond smile.

*"Sasuke, you know you don't need to hide anything from me. I've been knocking before entering since you two were fifteen."*

There was a terrible lump of guilt lodged in Sasuke's throat, but he forced it down and made some small talk before hanging up. Then, with faintly trembling fingers, he speed dialed Itachi.

*"'M tryin' t' sleep,"* Shisui groaned into the phone, but Sasuke didn't really care.

"Let me talk to Itachi," he demanded, impatiently tapping his foot and adjusting his seat on the couch as he waited, listening to quite a lot of shuffling noises.

Instead of a hello, there was a grunt at the other end of the line, letting Sasuke know his brother was conscious enough to listen at least.

"How long have people been thinking that Naruto and I are in a relationship?" he asked, skipping any explanations.

*"Did you seriously wake me up for that?"* Itachi complained, sounding like he was one more unnecessary word from going back to sleep.

"Because we weren't. We *weren't*. Why would you think that?"

*"Well, considering everything about you two screamed 'lovers', I think it wasn't strange for people to assume-"* Itachi paused. *"You weren't,"* he repeated calmly, sounding like he was becoming less newly awake and more amused every second.

"We weren't," Sasuke confirmed.

*"And now you are?"*

"Yes. I guess. It's none of your business!"

Itachi snorted, and he could hear Shisui demand to know what was going on in the background.

*"Congratulations then, I suppose. You're only, what, ten years later than the rest of us in finding out."*

"Ten years?" Sasuke asked in disbelief. It really couldn't be that long, could it?

*"Give or take,"* Itachi added, and now Shisui was snickering in the background.

"Ugh. Forget I asked."

*"Unlikely,"* his brother smugly told him, and Sasuke angrily pressed the end call button.

He'd thought that Naruto had walked around for maybe a year or two agonizing over Sasuke's inability to notice. But *ten*? Ten was bad. How was it even possible that no one had outright asked him? Had everyone who had ever met them just assumed they were together, from the start? Not that Sasuke socialized a lot without Naruto next to him...

Lying back on the couch he ran a hand through his hair, tired all of a sudden. Funny how he'd been wondering about the lack of lovers Naruto brought over... He sighed, placing his hand over his eyes instead. Turns out Naruto's dream lover already shared his bed, unknowingly. No wonder people never asked him if he had any dating plans or people he liked, when they seemed so interested in asking everyone else. And Naruto had been dealing with a one sided love for that long...

Because Sasuke wasn't sure he would have said yes a few years ago. He stared up at the ceiling through his fingers, contemplating things. Naruto was his most important person. More than anything, he wanted Naruto to be happy. That was love, wasn't it? It had to be, because Sasuke didn't like the thought of living his life without Naruto, much less with anyone else.

He'd always seen himself as terrible boyfriend material, but maybe that was because he'd always tried to imagine himself with someone other than Naruto.

Maybe he'd reciprocated Naruto's feelings longer than he thought.

Still, there wasn't much he could do about the past. There was, however, something he could do about the present. Lifting his phone again, he made one more phone call before resigning himself to wait for Naruto's shift to end. It really should be illegal to work on weekends.

xxx

Naruto was busy carrying a few heavy potted plants when Ino called his name.

"What?" he shouted back, scowling at the plants.

Sure, the weather was nice, but *why* did *these* plants in particular need to be moved? And of course, the small trolley he usually used had a broken wheel. Still, he couldn't bring himself to be annoyed for real. What was a little bad luck compared to Sasuke's kisses?!

Wondering why Ino wasn't answering, he turned to shout again, but was stopped by the pleasant sight of Sasuke walking towards him. Instantly there were happy little creatures tap-dancing in his stomach.

"Hey," he grinned, wiping some sweat from his forehead.

Good thing Sasuke was used to seeing him looking uncool. If asked, he'd probably say that uncool was Naruto's natural state. Bastard.

Sasuke stopped closer than he usually would, causing Naruto's grin to widen. His hands were shoved down the pockets of his chinos, and he looked surprisingly well-dressed for just coming to pick him up.

“I took the bike,” Sasuke informed him, squinting a little in the bright evening sun. “We’ve got a reservation to be on time for.”

“Really?” Naruto didn’t know if he should be surprised or horrified that Sasuke had booked them a table somewhere. “I’m not dressed for dinner!”

“You look fine to me,” Sasuke shrugged, causing Naruto to groan.

“I’m in my *work clothes*,” he stressed, biting his lips when the corner of Sasuke’s mouth quirked upwards.

“I’ve seen worse,” his supposed boyfriend said, but when Naruto gave him a pained look he stepped closer and hooked his fingers through the belt loops on Naruto’s dirt-covered pants. “I brought you some clothes, you can change in the office or something.”

“Dammit, tell me that first,” he complained, but it was probably ruined by the happy flush on his face. “And since when did you get so good at this, I thought you’d just act like normal and I’d have to beg to get some romance out of you.”

“It’s a onetime thing,” Sasuke promised, though his dark eyes held Naruto’s for a few, long seconds.

“Yeah, okay, I’ll go change,” Naruto muttered eventually, but then he narrowed his eyes contemplatively at Sasuke. “But you know, I had a rough day at work, I think I need a kiss to make it all better again.”

It was Sasuke’s turn to look pained, but he did give Naruto a kiss. He didn’t even object when Naruto wound his dirty fingers through his hair to deepen it, allowing Naruto to lick his tongue to his heart’s content until a gasp interrupted them. Annoyed, he turned his head to find Ino frantically waving at them.

“Oh no, please continue, sorry I didn’t mean to interrupt!” she told them, the words tumbling over each other as she hurried to leave, her face mirroring Naruto’s own embarrassment.

Naruto stared after her as she hauled her phone out of her bra, starting to furiously type on it. Great. Now all his friends would know that he and Sasuke... Actually, it was a good thing she’d caught them. This meant he didn’t need to explain things to them, they could all just happily believe that he and Sasuke were only intimate in private and no accidental late night confessions after years of pining had happened the day before, of course not, who even thought of such things?

“Feel better?” Sasuke asked, and Naruto whipped his head back around.

“No,” he said, ignoring that Sasuke was now trying to tell him they’d be late in favor of kissing him some more.

Eventually Sasuke managed to pry him off, but only because he insisted that Naruto would enjoy dinner. While Naruto really wouldn’t have minded going home to cuddle in front of a

movie or, better yet, just cuddle with no movie needed, he was also feeling giddy because Sasuke was totally taking him on a date and this was like a wild dream coming true.

After quickly washing off and changing in the staff room he waved goodbye to Ino, and followed Sasuke out to the front of the store.

“Want me to pedal?” he asked, huffing when Sasuke gave him a look asking if he was stupid.

He falls *once*, and Sasuke never lets him give him a ride. It’s not so bad to sit behind him, though, and he spent a minute or so just watching Sasuke’s back muscles move as they go in the general direction of their apartment.

“So, where are we going?” he eventually demanded to know, because he couldn’t pretend he wasn’t curious anymore.

“Ichiraku’s,” Sasuke admitted as they stopped at a red light, both of them placing a foot each on the ground.

“Really?” While it always makes him happy to eat ramen, he’d sort of expected something a little bit more special.

“Yeah,” Sasuke said, preparing to start moving again. “They’ve got that couple’s night tonight, remember? Ayame got us a table even though it’s full, so we really can’t be late.”

Naruto’s eyes widened as he stared at what he could see of Sasuke’s face. Of course he remembered, even though he’d tried to forget. When Sasuke started pedalling Naruto was still stuck on the ground, resulting in a near accident.

“What the hell?” Sasuke turned to look at him, but Naruto threw his arms around Sasuke’s waist and hid his face in the middle of his back.

“I love you,” he mumbled into Sasuke’s warmth, and he could feel him take a deep breath and exhale, slowly.

He pushed his face harder against Sasuke’s back, but gentle fingers brushed through his hair, and Naruto felt a wave of affection try to swallow him whole because Sasuke *hates* being touchy-feely in public.

“I know,” Sasuke whispered, softly rubbing his neck, and Naruto had to take a moment because his feelings were all over the place.

Sasuke *knows*, and he’s still here, and maybe he loves Naruto, too.

When he managed to glance up at Sasuke with one eye, he could see the apologetic look on his face.

“I’m sorry it took me so long,” Sasuke continued, and Naruto wondered if he knew just how long that was.

“It’s okay,” he said anyway, because it was, and it really wasn’t Sasuke’s fault. “I’ll have three bowls of miso ramen, extra everything.”

Sasuke’s lips twitched in a half-annoyed, half-affectionate way, like they have so many times before, and Naruto didn’t really feel like he suffered so much before. Sure, he wouldn’t have minded kissing earlier, but Sasuke had always been there for him.

When Sasuke ruffled his hair he made an annoyed noise, trying in vain to pat the mess back down. Not that it mattered, Sasuke *had* seen worse after all, and in the past ten years since they became best friends, Sasuke has never said or done anything that made Naruto feel like he wasn’t good enough.

“Come on,” Sasuke told him, getting in position again. “We’re already late.”

“It’s fine,” Naruto replied, but helped to keep their balance when Sasuke took off again. “I’m their favorite customer.”

Sasuke didn’t answer, but he didn’t need to. As they made their way through the city, Naruto hummed a tune to himself, smiling brightly at the people they passed. He hoped that they could see how happy he was. He wished he could let them all know that he was sitting behind the love of his life, being taken to a couple’s night at his favorite restaurant, and that nothing else could make him happier in this instant.

“Sasuke, remember a couple weeks back when you asked me how I’d find the love of my life if I wasn’t even looking?”

“If you tell me some sappy shit like how you were looking for *us* the whole time, I’ll make you walk the rest of the way,” Sasuke threatened him, apparently having used up his weekly quota for romance.

Naruto laughed, not deterred in the least.

“But Sasuke,” he argued, “You can’t say I’d be *wrong* if I told you that!”

Reaching behind him, Sasuke lightly slapped his arm.

“You’re only getting two bowls,” he said, ignoring Naruto’s loud protests.

Though, of course, in the end he gave in and let Naruto eat as much as he wanted. He sadly wouldn’t make googly eyes over their finished bowls, but Naruto figured he could live with that.

Sasuke was his best friend, his lover, his most important person. Sasuke meant everything to him, and to Sasuke, he meant the same.

There really wasn’t much else he could ask for.

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